

A Companion to the City of Rome

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ROME**

EDITED BY
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Edited by

Claire Holleran

and

Amanda Claridge

WILEY Blackwell

This edition first published 2018

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Editorial Office

350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148-5020, USA

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Holleran, Claire, 1979– editor. | Claridge, Amanda, editor.

Title: A companion to the city of Rome / edited by Claire Holleran, Exeter, Devon, UK; Amanda Claridge, Royal Holloway, Egham, UK.

Description: 1 | Hoboken, NJ : Wiley-Blackwell, 2018. | Series: Blackwell companions to the ancient world ; 101 | Includes index. |

Identifiers: LCCN 2018001005 (print) | LCCN 2018004510 (ebook) | ISBN 9781118300695 (pdf) | ISBN 9781118300701 (epub) | ISBN 9781405198196 (hardback)

Subjects: LCSH: Rome—Civilization. | Rome—History. | Rome—Antiquities. | Civilization, Ancient. | BISAC: LITERARY CRITICISM / Ancient & Classical.

Classification: LCC DG77 (ebook) | LCC DG77 .C306 2018 (print) | DDC 937/.63—dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2018001005>

Cover Design: Wiley

Cover Image: ©Stanford Digital Forma Urbis Romae Project

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Preface

Claire Holleran and Amanda Claridge

This volume was first conceived in 2008 to provide a comprehensive and authoritative guide to current research on the development of the city of Rome from its legendary foundations as a settlement on the banks of the Tiber down to late antiquity. Fresh discoveries and innovative approaches have in recent years transformed our traditional picture of the city of Rome, and the intention was to produce a one-volume overview of new developments in the field, integrating the latest archaeological, topographical, and historical evidence to address aspects of the physical structure of the city and the lives of its inhabitants. It is aimed at undergraduate and postgraduate students, but is also intended to be appealing and accessible to general readers.

The volume is divided into ten thematic sections and all chapters are carefully focused on the city of Rome. The opening section discusses the source material available for the study of Rome, with leading experts in their fields addressing approaches to the archaeological, written, epigraphic, and numismatic material. Readers are also introduced to the marble plans of the city, and an essay tracing the history of Rome places the rest of the chapters into their wider historical context. The remaining sections all deal with a different aspect of the city, with original essays exploring central issues such as Rome's evolving urban landscape and fabric, the size and composition of the population, the development of urban infrastructure, the experiences of living and dying in the city, the local economy, civic life, including religion, law, entertainment, and politics, and the staging and commemoration of the local Roman triumph. A final series of essays examine the changing reception of ancient Rome from antiquity through to the present day. Extensive cross-referencing between chapters is intended to encourage readers to note the connections between different topics, and a guide to further reading is provided at the end of each chapter to enable further exploration of key issues in more depth.

This volume has been a long time in the making, and the editors would like to thank all the contributors for their heroic patience, especially those who initially submitted their chapters some years ago; your continued understanding and good humor throughout has been much appreciated. It is with great regret that we note Brian A. Curran, who generously contributed a chapter on the "discovery" of ancient Rome in the Renaissance, sadly passed away before the companion went to press. Finally, we would also like to thank the editorial team at Wiley-Blackwell, and Clare Berrisford, a student intern at the University of Exeter, who provided invaluable help with copy-

editing and proof-reading.

Abbreviations

The abbreviations used in this volume for ancient authors and their works, as well as for collections of inscriptions, are as given in *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* (online edition), wherever possible. Abbreviations of journals may be found in *L'Année philologique*. Additional abbreviations are given below.

Chrest. Wilck. – U. Wilcken, *Grundzüge und Chrestomathie der Papyruskunde*. Leipzig-Berlin: Teubner, 1912.

CIG – *Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum*, 4 vols. Berlin, 1825–77.

ICUR – *Inscriptiones Christianae Urbis Romae*, Rome, 1922–

IGUR – L. Moretti, *Inscriptiones Graecae Urbis Romae*, 4 vols. Rome: Istituto italiano per la storia antica, 1968–90.

IvE – *Die Inschriften von Ephesos*. 8 vols. Bonn: Rodolf Habet, 1978–1984.

LTURS – A. La Regina *et al.* (eds.), *Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae Suburbium*, 6 vols. Rome: Edizioni Quasar, 2001–2013.

MAR – L. Haselberger *et al.* *Mapping Augustan Rome* [JRA suppl. 50]. Portsmouth, RI: Journal of Roman Archaeology, 2002.

Sel. Pap. – *Select Papyri*, 3 vols. Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1932–1941.

Tab. Herac. – *Tabula Heracleensis*. M. Crawford, *Roman Statutes I*. London: Institute of Classical Studies, 1996, 355–91, No. 24.

TPSulp. – G. Camodeca, *Tabulae Pompeianae Sulpiciorum (TPSulp)*: *Edizione critica dell'archivio puteolano dei Sulpicii*. Rome: Quasar, 1999.

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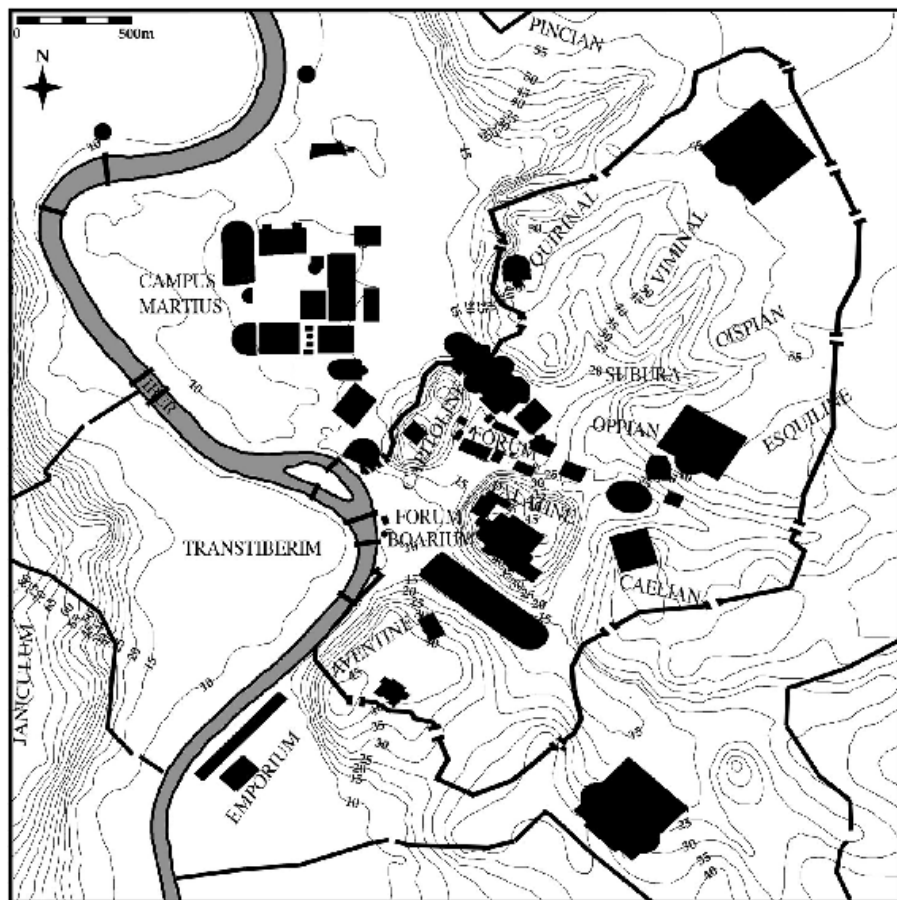
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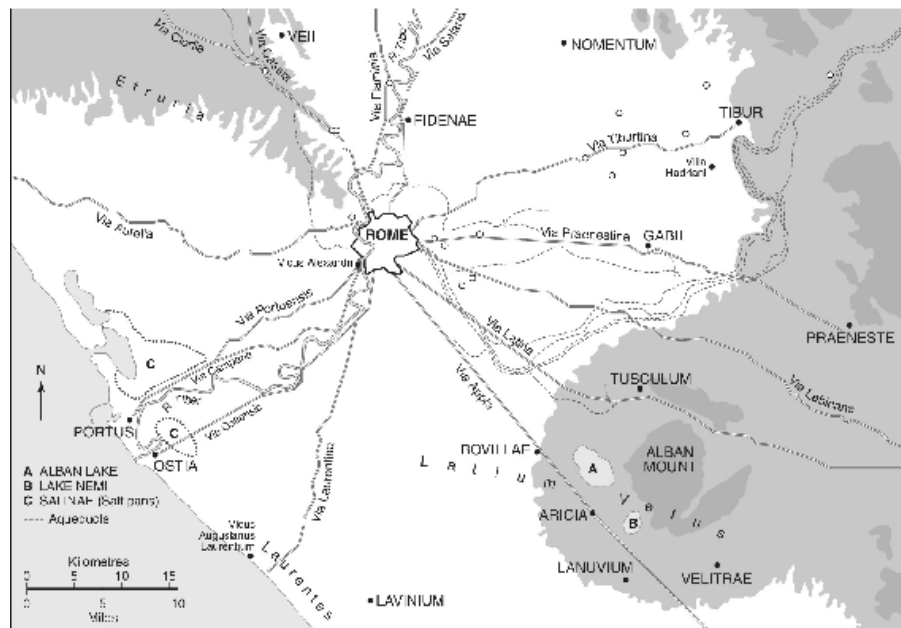
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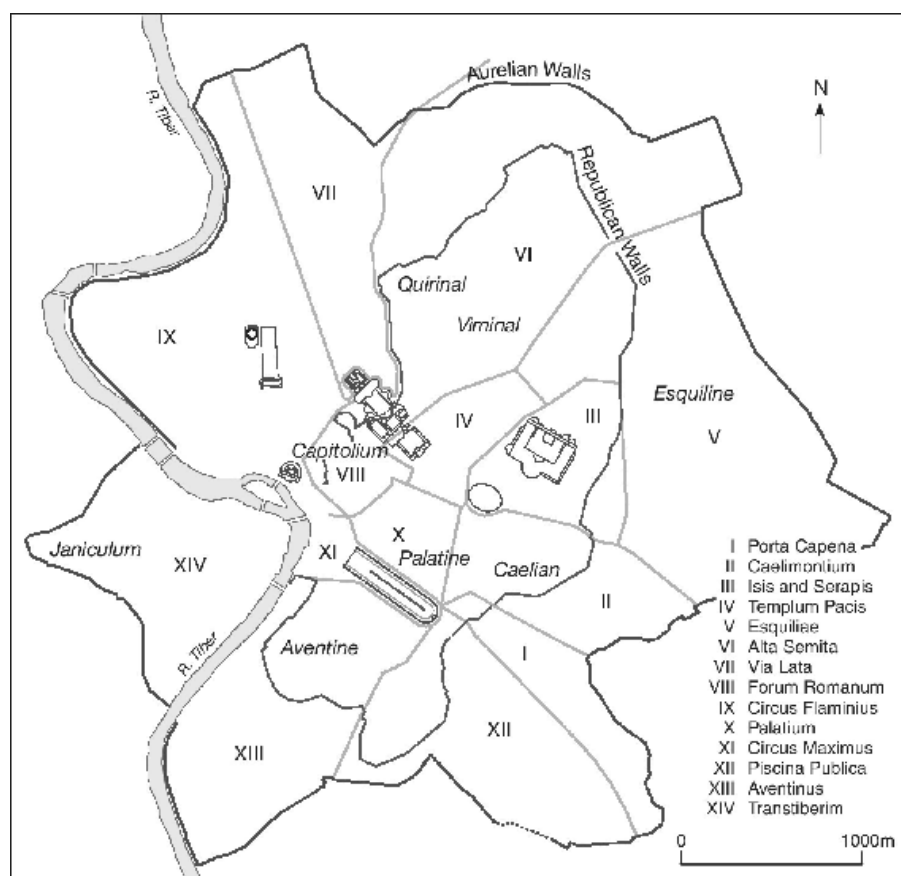


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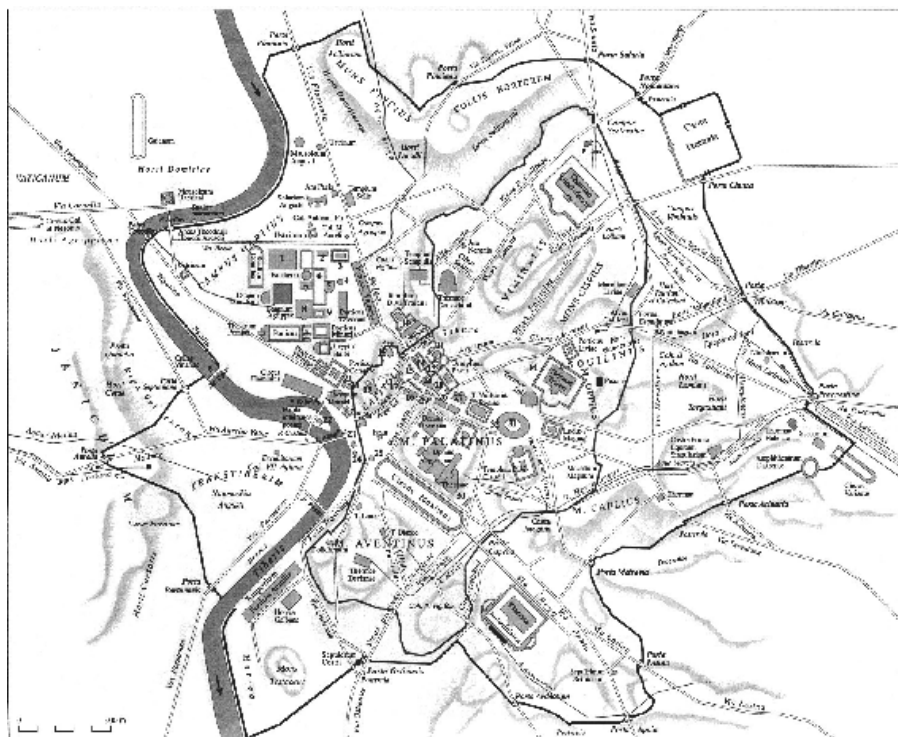
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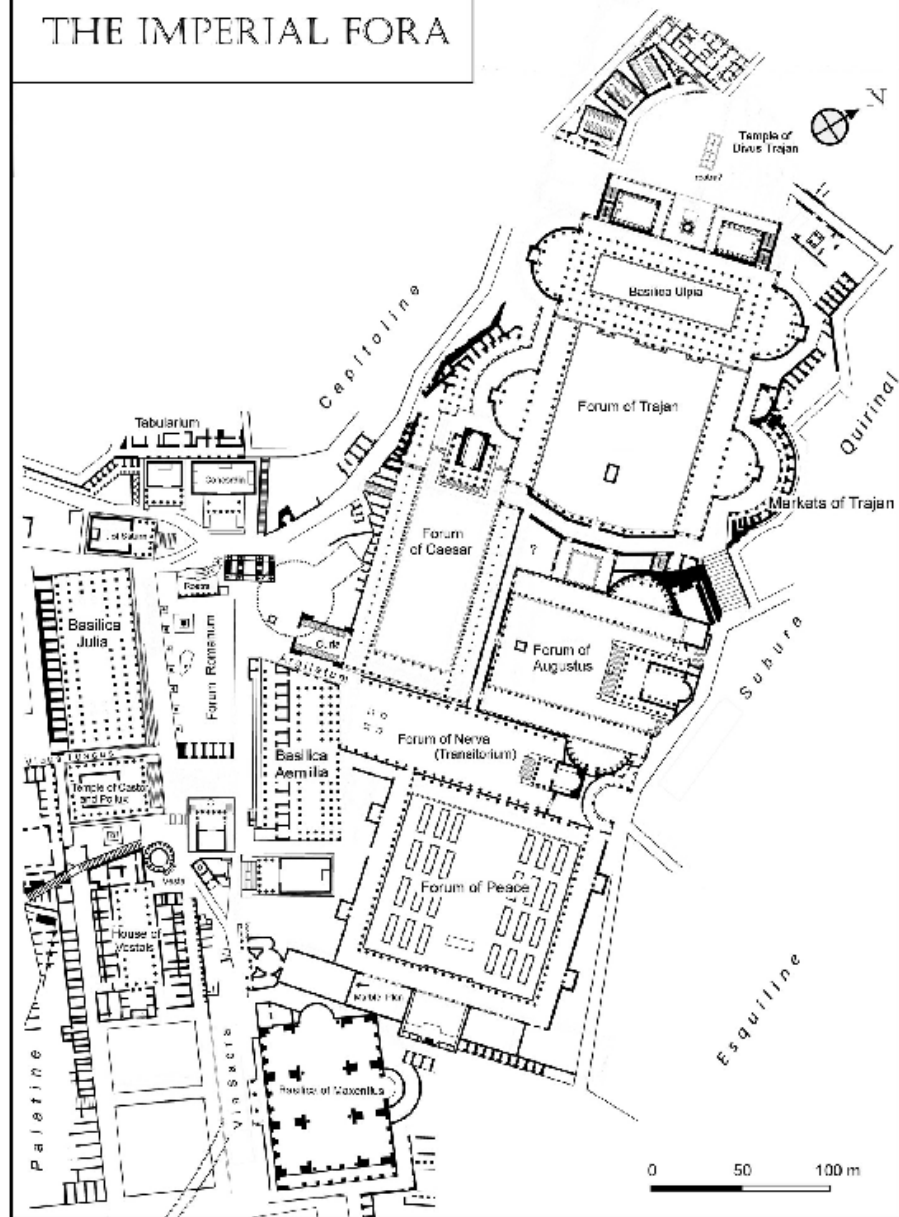


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THE IMPERIAL FORA



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(Adapted by Amanda Claridge from a map by Joseph Skinner).

PART I

INTRODUCTORY

CHAPTER ONE

i Archaeological Sources

Maria Kneafsey

Archaeology in the city of Rome, although complicated by the continuous occupation of the site, is blessed with a multiplicity of source material. Numerous buildings have remained above ground since antiquity, such as the Pantheon, Trajan's Column, temples and honorific arches, while extensive remains below street level have been excavated and left on display. Nearly 13 miles (19 kilometers) of city wall dating to the third century CE, and the arcades of several aqueducts are also still standing. The city appears in ancient texts, in thousands of references to streets, alleys, squares, fountains, groves, temples, shrines, gates, arches, public and private monuments and buildings, and other toponyms. Visual records of the city and its archaeology can be found in fragmentary ancient, medieval, and early modern paintings, in the maps, plans, drawings, and sketches made by architects and artists from the fourteenth century onwards, and in images captured by the early photographers of Rome.

Textual references to the city are collected together and commented upon in topographical dictionaries, from Henri Jordan's *Topographie der Stadt Rom in Alterthum* (1871–1907) and Samuel Ball Platner and Thomas Ashby's *Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome* (1929), to Roberto Valentini and Giuseppe Zucchetti's *Codice Topografico della Città di Roma* (1940–53), the new topographical dictionary published in 1992 by Lawrence Richardson Jr and the larger, more comprehensive *Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae* (*LTUR*) (1993–2000), edited by Margareta Steinby (see also *LTURS*). Key topographical texts include the fourth-century CE *Notitia Dignitatum* and *Curiosum* – see Flower, Chapter 1ii in this volume), the inscription on the Capitoline Base (*CIL* 6.975; *ILS* 6073), a dedication by the *vicomagistri* to Hadrian in 136 CE listing each *vicus* and its magistrates in five regions (I, X, XII, XIII, XIII), and the numerous labels on the Severan Marble Plan (see Tucci, Chapter 1iii in this volume, and the list in Valentini and Zucchetti, vol. 1, 56–62).

Antiquarian maps, drawings, prints, engravings and *vedute* (views) of Rome survive from the early fifteenth century onwards, providing valuable information about the way the city looked in the early modern period, and in particular, unique records of ancient buildings or monuments that are no longer visible in Rome as the result of deliberate destruction or deterioration. Outstanding are those produced in the early sixteenth century by Antonio da

Sangallo “the Younger” and Baldassare Peruzzi which document, for example, the lost roof and *spolia* colonnades of Old St Peter’s basilica, originally built by the emperor Constantine in the fourth century CE and rebuilt in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Krautheimer 1977, 234). Similarly, Andrea Palladio’s work remains our foremost evidence for the ground plans of the Baths of Agrippa, Titus, and Trajan (Claridge 2010, 33). Giovanni da Sangallo’s drawings (1496–1548), those of Pirro Ligorio (c.1513–1583), Etienne Du Pérac’s *Vestigi dell’Antichità di Roma* (1571), Giuseppe Vasi’s *Delle Magnificenze de’ Romani* (1747–1761), and Giovanni Battista Piranesi’s *Vedute di Roma* (1747–1778) variously document the monuments, buildings, and archaeological discoveries of Rome from the Renaissance to the *Settecento* (eighteenth century).

Historical maps of modern Rome are also primary topographical tools, providing an additional glimpse of an almost unrecognizable city, before much of the archaeological and construction work of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries took place. The earliest is Leonardo Bufalini’s, an orthogonal woodcut print of 1551 at a scale of roughly 1:2800 and in 24 joined sheets, which was used by generations of later cartographers as the basis for their own plans, notably Antonio Tempesta’s etched plan of 1593 (in 12 sheets), Giovanni Maggi’s in 1625 (in 48 sheets), and Giovanni Battista Falda’s in 1676 (12 sheets). Giambattista Nolli’s impressively accurate survey, *La Pianta Grande di Roma*, was published in 1748 and often includes indications (in black) of ancient walling within the fabric of the modern city (see Borsi 1986; 1990; 1993; Leuschner 2012). Rodolfo Lanciani’s detailed reconstruction of the ancient city, the *Forma Urbis Romae* (1893–1901), is an essential resource which maps ancient and medieval buildings overlaid on the modern city. The accompanying publication *Storia degli scavi di Roma* provides a chronological record of finds and excavations (*scavi*) in the city. Lanciani’s maps were reprinted in 1990, while the *Storia degli scavi* was updated and completed in seven volumes in 2002, taking the story from the Middle Ages to 1870. New digital, GIS-based maps of ancient Rome have been developed by Roma Tre University for the local, municipal archaeological service (Sovrintendenza Capitolina ai Beni Culturali), and in Germany by the AIS project based at Munich (LMU: Häuber and Schütz, 2004). Images of the fragments of the Severan Marble Plan are being made available with commentary online via the Stanford Digital *Forma Urbis Romae* Project.

The first photographic records of the city began in the 1840s, and depict Rome before, during, and after the Risorgimento and the events of 1870, as the city became “Roma Capitale” and changed beyond recognition (see Tucci, Chapter 33 in this volume). Robert MacPherson, Gioacchino Altobelli, Peter Paul Mackey, and John Henry Parker (whose photographic archive is available online via the British School at Rome) documented the city before

and after 1870, while Thomas Ashby's work (also available from the BSR) presents a view of the city into the early twentieth century. For a general overview see the collections of Piero Becchetti.

Many archaeological excavations and discoveries in Rome prior to the nineteenth century went either poorly documented, or entirely unrecorded. Specific information such as findspots, context, stratigraphy, and associated finds is often missing. Nevertheless, there are accounts of excavations from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, notably the manuscript *Memorie* of the sculptor Flaminio Vacca, written in 1594, and the various editions of those of Pietro Santi Bartoli (1630–1700), both reprinted together with other similar works in 1799/1836 by Carlo Fea (Claridge 2004, 37). Antonio Nibby (1792–1839) recorded finds and excavations in Rome and its wider periphery with close attention to detail, followed by Pietro Rosa (1810–1891), and, most importantly, towards the end of the nineteenth century the influential work of Rodolfo Lanciani (1845–1929) was published. Some of Lanciani's work has been noted above, but in addition to his contribution to mapping and documenting Rome, he was an indefatigable communicator to the general public, writing in both Italian and English (see References). News of archaeological discoveries since the late nineteenth century has been published in local and national archaeological journals: the *Notizie degli Scavi di Antichità*; *Atti and Memorie della Pontificia Accademia Romana di Archeologia*; *Atti and Memorie della Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei*; *Bullettino della Commissione archeologica del Comune di Roma*; *Nuovo Bullettino di archeologia cristiana*, and the publications of Rome university and the many foreign academies and institutes based in the city: *Archeologia Classica* (University of Rome La Sapienza); *Mélanges de l'École Française – Antiquité*; *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Römische Abteilung*; *Papers of the British School at Rome* (particularly "Notes from Rome"); and *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome. Fasti archeologici*, now online, hosts reports of current excavation work in the city (see References).

Guide to Further Reading

Modern approaches to the city's archaeological remains can be found in Carandini (2017), Claridge (2010), Coarelli (2007), and Coulston and Dodge (2000). For the study of historical maps of Rome, Frutaz (1962) remains an invaluable resource comprising three volumes of images and discussion, now supplemented by the work of Bevilacqua and Fagiolo (2012). Campbell (2004, vol. 1, 19–33) presents a useful introduction to architectural drawing from ancient buildings and monuments in Rome before 1600.

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ii Written Sources

Richard Flower

The city of Rome provides the backdrop to the events described in many works of Roman literature: the emperors of Tacitus and Suetonius glorified and terrorized its streets (e.g. Suet. *Aug.* 28.3–30.2; Tac. *Hist.* 3.70–72); Cicero appealed to the significance of the Capitoline temples and other great monuments that stood around him as he spoke (e.g. *Scaur.* 46–8); Livy provided historical information on the construction, destruction and reconstruction of notable buildings (e.g. 26.17.1–4, 27.11.16); Ovid wrote about amorous escapades among the many porticoes (e.g. *Ars am.* 2.2.1–8). For many classical authors, Rome was simply “the city” (*urbs*), unrivalled in the whole world. Yet, despite its significance, there are few sustained descriptions of the topography of the city in extant literature, with passing references to particular districts and monuments scattered throughout many different texts. The most accessible starting point for anyone wishing to locate information about a particular location is to consult a source book (e.g. Dudley 1967; Aicher 2004) or a topographical dictionary of the city (e.g. Platner 1929; Richardson 1992; *Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae* (*LTUR*)). This brief introduction will, however, discuss a few of the more extended ancient accounts of the appearance and monuments of Rome, as well as the ways in which they might be used by historians.

Some texts explore the city not by enumerating its sights, but rather by characterizing the different types of people to be found in various locations. In *Curculio*, a comedy by Plautus dating from the early second century BC, the audience is told that perjurers are to be found in the Comitium, show-offs in the central part of the Forum and male prostitutes in the Vicus Tuscus (Plaut. *Curc.* 462–86). Similarly, at the very end of the first century BCE, Ovid provided a candid exploration of the best haunts for picking up different types of women, moving through various locations within the city before eventually venturing out to the suburban Temple of Diana and off to the resort of Baiae (Ov. *Ars am.* 41–262). Some other passages take the form of a *periegesis*, a literary walkabout, listing places visited by the narrator while travelling through Rome. In some cases this journey is undertaken as part of an errand, such as Catullus’s search for his friend Camerius (Catull. 55) or Martial’s description of Silius searching desperately for a free dinner (Mart. 2.14), and the effect of these quick-moving passages is to convey a sense of an individual dashing about the city. In other cases, the account progresses in a more stately and directed fashion, as is the case with a famous passage from Ovid’s *Tristia*, written after he was exiled to the Black Sea in 8 CE. In this poem, Ovid’s

book arrives in Rome after a long journey and is then shown around some of the city's monuments, including the Forum of Caesar, the Temple of Vesta and the Palatine Hill (Ov. *Tr.* 3.1; Edwards 1996, 119–20). The tour itself evoked Virgil's description of the visit of Aeneas to the future site of Rome, in which the hero was shown around by Evander, while the audience were invited to contemplate how much the rustic landscape had changed by their own day (Verg. *Aen.* 8.1–369).

Although these literary explorations of the city might provide routes that could be followed by a real visitor to Rome, they certainly do not provide an exhaustive guide to the monuments that could be seen on the way. The selection of buildings described in any given text reflects its own concerns: Ovid's book does not take in many sights, but, appropriately enough, it does visit three separate libraries (at the Temple of Apollo on the Palatine, in the Portico of Octavia, and the Atrium of Liberty), none of which is willing to allow it in. Similarly, Ammianus Marcellinus's account of the visit to Rome in 357 CE by the emperor Constantius II describes many famous buildings, including the Colosseum, the Pantheon and the Forum of Trajan (Amm. Marc. 16.10.13–17). While this might be taken to provide a good account of the monuments that were most celebrated in the city in the late fourth century, it is notable that Ammianus's account only includes buildings from the second century CE or earlier, omitting more recent additions, such as the Arch and Basilica of Constantine, as well as the great Christian churches that were starting to appear by this point. The result is a rather antiquarian vision of the city, harking back to a supposedly better time and studiously avoiding taking notice of unwelcome intrusions into the classical landscape.

Numerous individual references to Rome's topography are also to be found in ancient "encyclopedic" texts, most notably the *Natural History* of Pliny the Elder (e.g. *HN* 3.66–7 on the size of the city) and Varro's *De lingua Latina* (e.g. *Ling.* 5.42 on the Capitoline Hill). In addition, the work *On the Aqueducts of Rome* by Sextus Julius Frontinus, who held the post of *curator aquarum* in 97 CE, provides a wealth of detail about the history, capacity and quality of the many aqueducts that supplied the city. One section of the work also describes the passage of each aqueduct into Rome and its many outlets in different urban districts, thereby supplying information about the number and distribution of military camps, public buildings, fountains and cisterns (Frontin. *Aq.* 2.78–86). Similar, but more detailed, enumerations of the city's buildings, both public and private, are to be found in two documents called the *Curiosum* and the *Notitia*, which are often referred to as the "Regionary Catalogues" or simply as the "Regionaries" (Latin text in Nordh 1949). These texts discuss each of Rome's fourteen districts in turn, in each case listing the important public buildings in that *regio*, before giving figures for the number of *vici* ("neighborhoods," with *Regio* XIV having many more than any other), shrines (*aediculae*, which are always equal in number to the *vici*),

vicomagistri (neighborhood magistrates; always 48) and *curatores* (overseers), as well as *insulae*, *domus*, *horrea* (granaries), *balnea* (baths), *lacus* (cisterns), and *pistrinae* (bakeries). Each text also has appendices providing totals for each type of building, as well as extra information including the numbers of aqueducts, obelisks, brothels, and public lavatories. These superficially precise figures do, however, present many interpretive problems. Firstly, while the texts in their current state are widely regarded as dating from the fourth century, they cannot be assumed to present a snapshot of the city at a particular date, rather than an accumulation of material collected over time and only updated infrequently and incompletely. There are also debates concerning the relationship between the two documents and the purposes for which they were compiled, with the main suggestions being that they were either official documents kept by the Urban Prefect for distribution of the *annona* or tax collection, guides to Rome for tourists or primarily ideological works for glorifying the city (see Wallace-Hadrill 2008, 294; Hermansen 1978; Arce 1999; Behrwald 2006). Moreover, the numbers in both the *Curiosum* and the *Notitia* do not add up, with discrepancies between the two documents and also within each text, since the regional figures often do not correlate with the totals in the appendix (see the table at Wallace-Hadrill 2008, 295). The very large total figure of more than 40,000 *insulae* also cannot be correct if this term is taken to refer to individual, free-standing blocks, so it seems likely that it actually denotes individual units of property, either physical or legal (see Coarelli 1997; Wallace-Hadrill 2008, 294–9). While the most widespread view is that the Regionaries can be used cautiously for evidence about fourth-century Rome, it is clear that, like all literary descriptions of the city, they certainly cannot be taken at face value.

Guide to Further Reading

Edwards 1996 is an excellent discussion of different treatments of the city of Rome in ancient literature. The best starting points for accessing literary information concerning particular parts of the city of Rome are the major topographical dictionaries (e.g. Platner 1929; Richardson 1992; *LTUR*) and source books (e.g. Dudley 1967; Aicher 2004) mentioned above. Wallace-Hadrill 2008, 259–312 provides a good introduction to the evidence for the regions of the city, including discussing the Regionaries at 294–9.

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iii The Marble Plans

Pier Luigi Tucci

The marble fragments known today as the Severan Marble Plan (or “*Forma Urbis Romae*,” which is also a modern name) belong to a monumental plan of the city of Rome engraved under the emperors Septimius Severus and Caracalla sometime between 203 and 211 CE – most probably in 203. It covered the west wall of a large rectangular hall in the south-east wing of Vespasian’s Temple of Peace, as rebuilt after a fire in 192 CE, probably replacing a similar Flavian plan. The plan was incised on 151 slabs of greyish white marble (from Proconnesos in the sea of Marmara), which were fixed to the brickwork of the wall behind with mortar and iron hooks, and measured some 13 meters high and 18 meters wide. It included nearly all of Rome within the Severan *pomerium* (the sacred boundary of the city), oriented with south-east at the top (placing *regio I* top center) and with the Capitoline hill in the middle (Carettoni, Colini, Cozza, and Gatti 1960). It has been suggested (Coarelli 2005) that the *Forma Urbis* had the same south-east orientation as the augurs’ platform (*auguraculum*) on the Capitoline Arx – the augurs’ main sight-line, as well as the vertical axis of the Marble Plan, would have been directed towards the sanctuary of Jupiter Latiaris on the Alban Mount (mons Albanus, modern Monte Cavo).

The plan depicted every building of the Severan city, generally at a scale of 1:240, although some of the major monuments were rendered in more detail and at a slightly larger scale. All the engraved lines, inscriptions and graphic conventions (such as the V staircase symbols indicating that a structure was multistoried) were probably picked out in red. On a recently discovered fragment a street is also painted red (Meneghini and Santangeli Valenzani 2007, 14–15). The plan shows a great range of building types, including *domus*, *insulae*, warehouses, temples, basilicas, theatres and amphitheatres, porticoes, baths, fountains, and aqueducts (See Figure 1.1). Most of the public monuments and many of the larger buildings, including the warehouses, are identified by name. Natural features are omitted, except for gardens within monumental complexes (see Lloyd 1982); the Tiber, for instance, is left blank (but it may have been painted), defined only by the buildings and docks built along its banks.

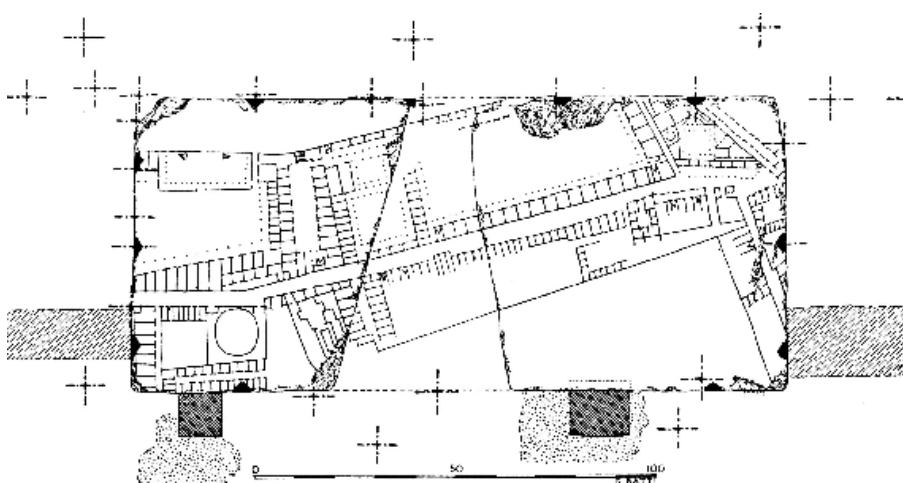


Figure 1.1 Fragment 28 of the Severan Marble Plan depicting the right bank of the Tiber in the Transtiberim region.

The Marble Plan testifies to an extraordinary amount of work and care – it was surely the result of a general survey of the city, possibly recorded first in sections on bronze tablets which were then combined together – but its purpose remains unclear. Some scholars (Coarelli 2001; Gros 2001; Meneghini 2009) believe that it was an administrative document, necessary to the office of the *Praefectus Urbi* (the Urban Prefect), even though its height will have rendered most of it unreadable (indeed, the identification of the hall of the Forma Urbis with a cadastral office is not supported by archaeological and literary evidence). Others have suggested that it was merely decorative (Castagnoli 1948). Another possibility is that, both in an original Flavian version and in the Severan phase, its function was essentially celebratory – exalting the scale and complexity of the city, capital of the empire (Tucci 2007).

During the Middle Ages most of the plan fell from the wall, and while many fragments were scavenged, together with those still fixed to the wall, many remained at the foot of the wall to be dug out in 1562 (Carettoni *et al.* 1960). These passed to the Farnese family palazzo on the Campus Martius. Between 1570 and 1580 drawings now in the Vatican Library (codex Vat. Lat. 3439 fols 13–23) were made of 91 fragments which have since been partially or completely lost. Hundreds of other fragments which had been reused in the construction of the Farnese's Secret Garden, between the Via Giulia and the Tiber, were found in the course of works on the river embankment in 1888 and 1899. New fragments have been brought to light on other occasions, for instance in the excavation of the Temple of Peace (Meneghini and Santangeli Valenzani 2007). An important fragment depicting the Circus Flaminius was found in 2000 in Palazzo Maffei Marescotti in via della Pigna. In 1741 the Farnese fragments were ceded to public ownership and displayed first along

the staircase of the Museo Nuovo on the Capitoline Hill and later mounted on an exterior wall in a courtyard of the Capitoline Museums, where they were subject to weathering. In the 1930s they were moved under cover, to the Antiquarium on the Caelian Hill, and from there, in about 1960, transferred to the attic of the Palazzo Braschi. Since 2000 they have been stored in wooden crates in the Museo della Civiltà Romana at EUR, awaiting a final destination.

After an initial study by Giovan Pietro Bellori in 1673 (Muzzioli 2000), in 1874 Heinrich Jordan published the first scientific monograph, but this was soon outdated by the rediscovery of the reused Farnese fragments and the discovery of other new pieces in further excavations. In 1948 Lucos Cozza undertook a detailed examination of the wall on which the slabs had been mounted (which still stands as part of the monastery of SS. Cosmas and Damian) determining for the first time their actual arrangement. There were originally 150 or 151 slabs placed horizontally and vertically in eleven rows, whose height ranges from 37 to 208 centimeters. In the late 1950s Cozza also excavated the rest of the hall, and a complete photographic documentation of all the engraved fragments was published at ¼-scale (Carettoni *et al.* 1960). Emilio Rodríguez Almeida subsequently produced a comprehensive supplement (1981), with drawings of all the fragments, proposing many new joins and identifications. New identifications and reinterpretations of securely positioned fragments continue to be made (e.g. Tucci 2004; 2006; 2013–2014; Tucci and Cozza 2006) together with research on the character and significance of the document as a whole (Rodríguez Almeida 2002), the contribution that it can make to our understanding of Roman urbanism, mapmaking (Reynolds 1996) and ways of seeing (Trimble 2006; 2007; 2008) – although the latter approach (what the Forma Urbis signified to the viewer) has not been particularly fruitful so far. The preserved portions of the Forma Urbis approximate to some 10 % of the original surface of c. 235 square meters. Of this roughly half (5 % of the whole) can be securely identified, whereas the other half – consisting of hundreds of fragments – represents topography of unknown location. The surviving fragments vary in size, from small lumps to nearly complete reconstituted slabs. The thickness of the fragments ranges from 37 to 96 mm, some having rough backs and some smooth; these differences are very useful in efforts to reunite or associate separated fragments. Other clues which can aid in the reconstruction process are the traces of slab edges, holes for metal hooks, and the direction of the natural grain of the marble. Such criteria are then combined with consideration of plans or inscriptions of recognizable buildings, literary sources, and archaeological investigations. An approach to the digitization of the evidence was developed recently by Stanford University, although only a few minor fragments were newly identified and no critical analyses have been attempted (<http://formaurbis.stanford.edu/> Accessed January 6, 2018).

Other plans incised on marble are known (Carettoni *et al.* 1960, 206–10;

Meneghini and Santangeli Valenzani 2007, 26–36), though most are small or isolated fragments and unlikely to have belonged to complete plans of the city. The plans now in Urbino and Perugia relate specifically to tombs, recording their layout and dimensions for posterity (a provenance from Rome is attested only for the former plan). Other partial marble plans – from the Colle Oppio/ Via della Polveriera, the Isola Sacra necropolis (badly damaged), the city of Amelia (just a drawing), and the one discovered in 1997 under the Domitianic floor of the Forum of Nerva (thus dating to the years before 98 CE) – depict unidentified sectors of a city, presumably Rome. These plans are very likely older than the Severan one, and appear more detailed: the thickness of the walls is indicated by double lines, and often the names of the proprietors are given together with the length of the facades in Roman feet. The best example is provided by the plan from Via Anicia in Trastevere, found in 1983 and showing the plan of the temple of Castor and Pollux in the Circus Flaminius as well as some warehouses along the Tiber’s bank, with the lengths in Roman feet of their façades and the owners’ names (Tucci 2013). This plan depicts the same area visible on some fragments of the Forma Urbis, in particular a sort of platform built on the river bank which might be the shed which housed the “ship of Aeneas” described by Procopius (*Goth.* 4.22). Also a new fragment found in 1999 in the Temple of Peace, with the partial plan of the Forum of Augustus, shows the same topography visible on fragments 16a–d of the Severan Marble plan (the Temple of Mars Ultor and the south-east portico and exedra of the Forum of Augustus), thus permitting a direct comparison (Tucci 2007). The drawing of the right-hand portico as portrayed on the new plan, with a circle for the column, a square for the base and four lines for three steps, becomes highly simplified on the Severan plan, which shows a dot for the column and a single line for the staircase, without the square bases. A section of the south-east hemicycle is also visible on the Severan version: its wall is rendered with double lines and is recessed, but the niches that adorned it are not visible.

Guide to Further Reading

The best starting point for accessing detailed information concerning the Forma Urbis is still Carettoni *et al.* 1960. See Kleiner and Kleiner 1982 for comments on Rodríguez Almeida’s updated edition of 1981. Reynolds 1996 is a very useful discussion (in English) of different aspects of the marble plans of Rome. The essays published in Meneghini and Santangeli Valenzani 2007 provide information on recent findings and suggestions for new avenues of research (but cf. Tucci 2007 for a review). See also Forma Urbis Severiana 2016.

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iv The Epigraphic Record

Boris Rankov

In Rome, the practice of inscribing on stone and other materials goes back to the regal period, when the Greek alphabet was first adapted for the writing of Latin. Several literary sources of the first century BCE claim that laws and treaties of this period, inscribed on bronze or even on wood, could still be seen preserved in or attached to various temples of the city, including that of Diana on the Aventine and the great temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus on the Capitoline.

Although a number of earlier Etruscan and Greek inscriptions are known from the vicinity of Rome (Moretti 1968–90), our earliest surviving inscription from the city itself is the Forum Cippus (*CIL* 12.1 = 6.36840), which may date from the late sixth century BCE. This tuff stone was found in the area of the Comitium in the Forum, immediately in front of the Senate House, and is sometimes mistakenly referred to as the *lapis niger* from the black paving which overlaid it. The inscription was cut to be read vertically up and down in alternate lines, and although it was certainly in Latin, its meaning remains obscure. After this time, pottery inscribed in Latin begins to be found in and around the Forum and the Palatine, and from the third century inscribed votive objects in pottery and bronze were deposited in the river in the vicinity of the Tiber Island where a sanctuary of the healing god Aesculapius had been founded in 298 BCE.

A sarcophagus found in the tomb of the Scipios near the Porta Capena and now on display in the Vatican Museums, marks the beginning of an epigraphic habit which continued throughout antiquity. A carved inscription on the front (*CIL* 12.6–7 = 6.1284) identified the occupant as L. Cornelius Scipio Barbatus, the consul of 298 BCE, listed the magistracies he had held and described his career. Such *elogia*, as they were known, gradually became more widespread and detailed, the most elaborate of all being the *Res Gestae* of Augustus, written in the first person and originally inscribed on two bronze pillars set up in front of his Mausoleum (Suet. *Aug.* 101.4).

Simpler epitaphs, recording little more than the name of the deceased and, from the later first century BCE, information such as age of death, together with formulaic expressions of grief, were inscribed on the tombs and grave *cippi* which lined the roads leading out of the city, and on the small slabs marking the niches for ash-urns in underground *columbaria* and the inhumations in Rome's catacombs. Even on these epitaphs, however, and especially on those for soldiers, the influence of the aristocratic *elogia* is

evident.

Elogia also appeared on honorific statue bases from the late Republic onwards. As with other forms of inscription, these became much more common from the reign of Augustus, who decorated his new forum with statues and *elogia* of Roman military heroes. At about the same time, marble became the favored stone for these and most other inscriptions.

As the spoils of empire flooded into Rome in the second century BCE, her new-found wealth was used by an increasingly competitive senate to adorn the city with temples, basilicas and other public buildings. These were inscribed with the name and offices of the dedicator, such as a temple of Hercules Victor vowed and built by L. Mummius, the consul who had destroyed and looted Corinth in 146 BCE (*CIL* 12.626 = 6.331), or the bridge linking the Tiber island with the Campus Martius constructed by L. Fabricius as *curator* of roads in 62 BCE (*CIL* 12.751 = 6.1305). Several of the building inscriptions carved in Rome under the Principate are considered by stonecutters to be amongst the finest ever made, including the dedication by the Senate and People of Rome at the foot of Trajan's Column (*CIL* 6.960), whose lettering has inspired many modern typefaces. From the first century CE, many building inscriptions were composed of letters cast in bronze which were fixed into slots cut into the stone. Often the slots survive even though the original letters have long since been melted down, as with the dedications on the Arch of Titus in the Roman Forum (*CIL* 6.945), or on the Pantheon (*CIL* 6.896) where the bronze letters currently visible are nineteenth-century replacements. Under the Principate, the habit of making religious dedications also spread to more humble members of society, who erected small shrines and altars of all sizes in temple precincts throughout the city. These altars were often decorated with sculptural reliefs depicting the deity on the front, and sacrificial vessels on the sides.

In contrast with building inscriptions and private dedications, public and official documents were usually inscribed on bronze tablets. These were often nailed to walls in and around temple buildings, especially on the Capitoline. Suetonius (*Vesp.* 8.5) tells us that some 3,000 such documents were destroyed on the hill by the fire of 69 CE. Because of the value of the bronze, relatively few such documents have survived, a notable exception being a tablet found in St John Lateran by Cola di Rienzo in 1344, and now in the Capitoline Museum, which bears part of the law granting imperial powers to Vespasian in 70 BCE (*CIL* 6.930).

More than 50,000 of the 400,000 Latin inscriptions surviving from antiquity have been found in Rome, together with several thousand more in Greek and other languages, and more come to light each year. Inscriptions were on view throughout the city: the emperor Constantine is said to have referred to Trajan as the "wall-creeper" (*herbam parietariam*) because his name could be seen everywhere (*Epit.de Caes.* 41.13). They were, indeed, so common that

standardized abbreviations (such as *SPQR*) could be used and be readily understood. Today, the inscriptions provide us with detailed information about the names and careers of individuals of all ranks, from senators to bakers and from empresses to slaves; they can tell us when and why buildings were erected, which gods were worshipped, what statutes were enacted.

It is, however, all too easy to forget that the disembodied stones on display in the splendid epigraphic galleries of the Museo Nazionale Romano or the Capitoline or Vatican Museums were hardly ever free-standing. Inscriptions were meant to be seen and interpreted as one element of a funerary monument, or beneath a statue, or labelling a major building, or fixed to a wall with hundreds of other documents. While the extent of ancient literacy is a matter of dispute, even those who could not read them would have been able to interpret the words and the monuments on which they were inscribed together as professions of status, piety, or power. It is only by considering them in these original contexts that Roman inscriptions can be fully understood.

Guide to Further Reading

The Latin inscriptions of Rome are published in the sixth volume of the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* (abbreviated as *CIL*), where more than 40,000 have appeared to date. Greek inscriptions of the city are published in the four volumes of *Inscriptiones Graecae Urbis Romae* (abbreviated as *IGUR*).

An excellent introduction to Latin epigraphy in general may be found in Keppie (1991). For those who wish to study inscriptions in greater depth, Gordon (1983) is a superb primer with detailed commentaries on selected examples (with photographs) drawn mainly from the city of Rome, while Cooley (2012) provides by far the most comprehensive and up-to-date handbook in English. For those who wish to see Rome's inscriptions for themselves, Lansford 2009 now provides a guidebook to the city's visible inscriptions from all periods. The essays in Bodel (2001) provide useful discussions of how inscriptions are to be exploited by ancient historians.

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v Coins

Andrew Burnett

The role of both monuments and coinage as part of the memory of the Roman state has been adduced as the reason for the appearance of architectural designs on coins from the late second century BCE (Meadows and Williams 2001). Coins do indeed seem an obvious source for supplementing our knowledge of lost buildings, but they are not straightforward to use. First, a number of modern forgeries have been made (e.g. some specimens depicting the Colosseum, or some of Domitian's building coins of 95–6 CE). But, even when we can be confident that a coin is genuine, there are a number of difficult questions of methodology before we understand what it may contribute to the building history of ancient Rome (Burnett 1999; Elkins 2015). We may think that coins are like a modern archaeologist's photos, but they are not.

A first problem is whether or not the coin is intended to depict a monument or a die engraver's visualization? A particular case concerns the question of how many monuments the four representations of Octavian on horseback are supposed to represent. Similarly, how many temples of Mars Ultor do the two very different depictions of Augustan coins illustrate (Simpson 1977) – and are they compatible with the surviving remains in the Forum? All one can really do, as suggested by Bergemann (1990), is to list out the evidence. A second problem is whether or not a building depicted on a coin ever existed (Prayon 1982). There are a number of examples of buildings shown on coins which never existed. A limiting case is the temple of the *Clementia Caesaris*, shown on coins of 44 BCE. In a similar way the new Flavian Temple of Capitoline Jupiter, destroyed in the fighting of 69 and rebuilt in 70–75, was already shown as complete on coins of 71.

Different representations of the same monument may appear. In the case of the (now lost) Arch of Nero on the Capitol, we have representations on coins minted both at Rome and Lugdunum (Figures 1.2 and 1.3). They vary widely in detail, both at the different mints and within each mint. Kleiner (1985) provided a convincing reconstruction of the sequence in which the various different dies were made; and argued that the first dies at Rome were “more carefully cut and more detailed than the later dies,” and differed substantially from the slightly later dies used at Lugdunum. His study was based on a very careful study of the coins themselves and their “conventions.” He suggested that the earliest dies from Rome were most likely to be most accurate. His conclusion seems plausible, but a certain amount of doubt about the arch's appearance cannot be dispelled.



Figure 1.2 Sestertius of Nero, mint of Rome. London, British Museum, CM BMC 187.

Photograph: A Burnett.



Figure 1.3 Sestertius of Nero, mint of Lugdunum. London, British Museum. CM BMC 329.

Photograph: A Burnett.

But what do we mean by “conventions”? The phrase embodies ways in which structures were commonly depicted, though it would be a mistake to think this was according to any clear canon of conventions, since much variation is possible; perhaps “habits” might be a better term. Two habits that can regularly be observed are variations in the number of columns (any number may appear on a coin, however many a building actually had) and the way that the column facade is opened up to reveal the cult statue which would normally be concealed in the internal cella.

Faced with all these problems, one might be forgiven for just giving up and saying that the coin evidence is more or less worthless, and skepticism, particularly about the coin evidence for buildings outside Rome, is understandable. But sometimes depictions are accurate, as we can see in those

rare cases where we have coins and a surviving structure, e.g. the Colosseum (Elkins 2006) or the Arch of Severus. A case could perhaps be made for adopting a more optimistic attitude towards representations on coins made at Rome as opposed to the provinces, but it is hard to see how we could ever avoid any lingering uncertainty. It is only when we can combine a detailed study of the coins with the results of excavation that we can really feel on solid ground.

Perhaps this all shows that we are really looking at the coins in the wrong way – why is it that they are not “accurate”? The very existence of these discrepancies is sufficient to show that the die engravers were not trying to reproduce the actual appearance of individual buildings, but to celebrate the idea of the building. Clearly, for this purpose, the depiction on the coin had to bear some relation to the actual building, but this need not have been a very close one. The coins illuminate what was thought to be important to the people who produced them, and information about such contemporary perceptions is actually at least as interesting as the real appearance of the buildings themselves.

We can take two examples. The first arises from the simple point that monuments and buildings appear almost exclusively on coins of the Romans, of all ancient cultures, whether in the Mediterranean or further east, and shows that they were a natural part of the cultural outlook of the Romans. The Roman empire depended almost entirely on the cities for its stability and coherence, and the celebration of buildings and urban space is consequently a common theme. In contrast, the earlier Greek preoccupation with the natural world explains why so much of Greek art, be it poetry, coin designs or jewelry, is dominated by animals or plants.

Yet, buildings were not dominant. The majority of coins do not depict buildings: even in the first century they account for only about 5 %. These figures fluctuate, as construction fluctuated. There is a rough correlation between the number of equestrian statues on coins and the numbers we know from other sources were actually set up, and the same is true of buildings: the concentration of monumental coin designs at the end of the Republic and the reign of Augustus (Fuchs 1969), followed by a lull which picks up again in the late first century, falls away in the second century and rises again in the Severan period, thereby reflecting the actual level of building activity in Rome. By the third century, external threats were once again a dominant theme, and the economic wealth of the empire began to falter. Public building was reduced, and new concerns appeared. Depictions of buildings on coins decline, to be replaced by new concerns with security, for example, such as the “camp-gate” design of the fourth century. These seem unspecific, and are probably only generic representations of the defenses which the emperors had to provide to secure the empire.

Guide to Further Reading

Modern study begins with Donaldson (1859), and since then there have been many treatments of specific periods or buildings, such as Fuchs (1969) or Bergemann (1990). More comprehensive treatments have been given by Price and Trell (1977), which covers the whole of the Roman world, and Hill (1989), although the latter is rather disappointing. A review of the topic was published by Burnett (1999), but Kleiner (1985) remains the best methodological case study.

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CHAPTER TWO

Historical Overview: From City-state to Christian Center

Christopher Smith

This chapter charts a huge arc of history from the early days of Rome to the end of the Western Roman Empire. This is a story that has often been told, and whose contours are relatively well established, but the focus here is on the role of the city of Rome itself. The relationship between the city and the empire is what concern us: how did the city encourage the foundation of the empire, and how did the creation of that empire impact on the city?

Beginnings

The Romans had two accounts of the foundation of their city, and they were joined with difficulty. One, which appears to be the local story, is of the twins Romulus and Remus, cast away by an evil relative but miraculously saved, suckled by a wolf, and brought up by strangers, arriving at manhood to take their kingdom, but then fighting on the day of foundation. Romulus kills Remus, but Rome is founded. Traditionally this was dated to 753 BCE, but there was another story available in which Aeneas fled the city of Troy on the night of its destruction by the Greeks, traditionally in the twelfth century BCE, and made his way westwards, landing at Lavinium, and settling at Alba Longa. The two versions can both fit a divinely inspired, fateful history, but they look in different directions, one largely local, the other facing east to the Greek world. In their uneasy coexistence, the two stories symbolize the nature of the Roman experience, both rooted in its local identity and facing outwards to the empire.

Traditionally, the sources (for example, Livy, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, and Plutarch) tell us that Romulus, having founded the city, expanded its citizen body by admitting outlaws and stealing women from the neighboring tribe of the Sabines. To Romulus is also attributed a set of constitutional reforms, highly anachronistic, but which were taken to offer the underpinnings for the state – i.e. a senate, an assembly and a formal relationship between the assembly and the conferment of power, *imperium*, which should be seen largely in a military context. Romulus, whose death comes at the hands of the senators (according to sources which have been influenced by the much later

death of Julius Caesar – see for instance Livy 1.16), was succeeded by a Sabine king, Numa, who pursued a predominantly religious program. This completed the fundamentals of the Roman state, a state based on political structures with a strong religious framework which has a very substantial capacity to wage war on its neighbors. The next two kings, Tullus Hostilius and Ancus Marcius, were successfully belligerent. The fifth king of Rome is an outsider; Tarquinius Priscus was said to be related to Demaratus, one of the aristocratic group, the Bacchiads, who were exiled from Corinth. He had settled in Etruria, north of Rome, and this can be seen in the name of Tarquinius (related to the settlement of Tarquinia).

Servius Tullius, the sixth king of Rome, is one of the most intriguing, because of the dense clusters of stories that mark him out. His birth is miraculous; many important constitutional reforms are attributed to him; and his death is the product of vicious familial intrigue, which brings another Tarquin to the throne. It is also interesting that there was a story in the sources about Macstrna, a figure identified with Servius Tullius, who was associated with the Vibenna brothers from Vulci in a military exploit (the key passage is Tac. *Ann.* 4.65). On the inside of a tomb at Vulci from the fourth century we see a painting with some of these individuals shown in a dramatic engagement, which implies that however confused the details, elements of sixth-century Roman history were known at quite an early stage, and not just in Rome. As we assess the influence and significance of Rome in the sixth century, this complex but intriguing evidence at least suggests that Rome's history was being discussed on both sides of the Tiber. The reign of Servius Tullius's successor, Tarquinius Superbus, was characterized by repression and brutality, but also by expansion and a substantial building program, the most significant elements of which included the temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus on the Capitol and the Cloaca Maxima, Rome's storm drain. His attack on Lucretia, the virtuous wife of a man called Lucius Junius Brutus, which led to her suicide, was the catalyst for his expulsion. Shortly afterwards, Lars Porsenna, an Etruscan adventurer, may briefly have held the city. However, for the sources it was the expulsion of Tarquinius Superbus, the Proud, which brought the beginning of the Republic, and the role of a Brutus, allegedly ancestor of Caesar's assassin, was both the inspiration for and product of that act.

The archaeological realities of the city do indeed suggest Rome's development of central institutions, complex religious associations, and hierarchies to support the political structures, which were heavily aristocratic. For the earliest period, we rely on burial evidence such as that from the Forum necropolis. Such evidence is patchy for Rome, but what we have is entirely comparable to burial evidence from the area around Rome to the south (Latium) and the north (Etruria), with local variations. Broadly, the pattern is of cremations in the tenth and ninth centuries, then inhumations, and by the

later seventh century, some very wealthy burials. We find gender-specific items, and probably indicators of status, such as weaponry for men. At Rome, and at large sites like Veii, we can see contemporary burials across a wide area – there are burials on several hills at Rome as well as in the Forum.

From the eighth century, we begin to see evidence of construction and manipulation of space. There appears to have been some fortification or boundary marking, such as the wall on the slopes of the Palatine which Carandini found. In addition, increasingly from the eighth to the sixth centuries, the lower part of the Forum is raised by landfill, monumentalized, and the Forum necropolis closes. This may all suggest that Rome has developed a central political space in which the communities on the separate hills can join. Early in the sixth century, there is temple building in the Forum Boarium, right by the Tiber river – this is one of the earliest temples we know in central Italy, but the trend develops rapidly and culminates, in one sense, in the vast construction of the temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus on the Capitoline, perhaps one of the largest temples at the time in Italy and Sicily. Infrastructure such as the Cloaca Maxima and domestic building has also been found, and it is likely that Rome developed at least a partial fortification for the city in the sixth century. Dating these various constructions is not easy – in some instances we rely on associated pottery; in others, on the nature of the tuff stone which is used (Rome only begins to use Grotta Oscura tuff after the conquest of Veii in 396 BCE). Individual aspects of the archaeology might be doubted, but taken as a whole, there is now an impressive amount of evidence for the development of archaic Rome.

The methodological difficulty remains that, whilst one can interpret the archaeological record through the evidence of the sources, to do so is profoundly problematic, because the sources postdate the evidence by several hundred years (Fabius Pictor around 200 BCE being the first Roman narrative historian). Whilst one can construct mechanisms by which some evidence survived – oral tradition, drama, inscriptions, and records of magistrates all being possibilities – these means do not give a reliable chronological account of the earlier period; consequently we must assume that some of the apparent confirmations of an archaeological record that we can read and date by literary sources, which had largely invented the chronology of the regal period to fill gaps between various fixed points, are fortuitous. This means that studying the history of the regal period is, to a large extent, an exercise in studying the invention of tradition – but perhaps not wholly. The story of Macstrna, and of Porsenna too, reminds us that Rome was implicated in broader traditions, and that there was a general sense of a sequence of powerful individuals in the sixth century who were at the limits of their constitutional power, or who held power by the fragile bonds of charisma and violence. Historians debate at length some of the immensely technical issues surrounding this period, but the general account of the passage from monarchy to annual magistracy around

the beginning of the fifth century BCE is probably correct.

Similarly, there is no doubting that Rome had attained an extraordinary level of power within the Italian context by the early fifth century; the temple of Jupiter is the best index of this. It is tempting, therefore, to accept the tradition we find in Polybius 3.22–5, that Rome was sufficiently significant in 509 BCE to have been party to a treaty with the main power of the western Mediterranean, Carthage. We may argue about how original or derivative Roman artistic culture was, but it is less easy to deny the economic and political power that was able to mobilize labor to create the urban landscape of early fifth-century Rome.

To a degree this also supports the historical account which indicates that Rome had grown at the expense of her nearest neighbors, the Latins. One set of facts that might have survived from an early period may have been lists of victories, which subsequently became the lists of triumphs of the Roman magistrates. Another interesting indicator is that most of the Roman tribes (that is one of the divisions of the Roman people) have the names of aristocratic families. This might lead to the argument that the leading families of Rome were involved in the conquest of neighboring areas, or were incorporated into the city. The Claudii from the Sabina are therefore said by Livy (2.16) and Dionysius of Halicarnassus (5.40) to have been incorporated into the Roman citizen body, and allowed to settle an area outside the city limits. Finally, the tradition is clear that Rome used her conquests to increase the size of her own army by processes of integration. If Rome had already begun such a process by the fifth century, this would assist us in understanding how she had become so significant, and how she was able to withstand the challenges that were to come.

To conclude, Rome, by the beginning of the fifth century, had left behind a history of kings, and begun to be characterized by annual magistracies (that is to say, a Republic), had a substantial urban settlement with clearly demarcated public spaces and several temples – one of which was one of the largest known in Italy – and had expanded her territory, resources, and population through conquest of her neighbors.

The Consequences of Growth

This was not, however, an entirely straightforward process, and the sources preserve and dwell on aspects of the difficulty of Rome's early history. Domestic strife and foreign threats are the characteristic leitmotifs of the narrative account. The Romans recalled a division between the aristocratic patricians, made up of distinguished families linked by marriage and bound by inheritance rules, and the plebs (a collective noun) made up of plebeians, who

formed the rest of the population. As early as 494 BCE, the plebeians won concessions by their secession – that is, their temporary withdrawal from the city – which threatened Rome’s capacity to exist. One such concession was the appointment of annual tribunes of the people who were granted sacrosanctity, and thus offered the people a degree of direct protection. In response, the patricians tried to tighten their exclusivity, but were unsuccessful. By the fourth century, the existence of a written law-code (the Twelve Tables), and the gradual admission of plebeians into political, military, and religious office had led to the near-complete erosion of the formal privileges of the patricians (with the exception of a few highly symbolic priesthoods), although birth continued to count for much. The class of the descendants of office holders, the *nobiles*, had a tight grip on power throughout the Republic; power in the hands of those who had no office-holders in their family, the new men or *novi homines*, was always the exception.

The desire of the plebeians to gain access to office might indicate that the movement was about the mobility of a relatively small group just outside the patriciate, and this would seem to be part of the truth, but there were other grievances. Debt, and the failure to allow the plebeians to benefit from the increasing Roman territory, were also aspects of what moderns term the “Struggle of the Orders.” This relates to the second theme in Roman history. The fifth century was characterized by a grim struggle to defend against an increasing number of incursions from neighboring tribes, the Hernicans, Aequians, and Volscians. These tribes seem to have been in search of territory in the Latin plain, and so another part of this story is the negotiation of appropriate relations between Romans and the Latin League. Roman successes, culminating in the destruction of Rome’s nearest Etruscan neighbor, Veii, led to demands by the plebeians for direct compensation for their military contribution in the form of distribution of land. This itself seems to derive from concerns over increasing plebeian indebtedness, and may also relate to the consequence of the demands made by more or less constant warfare. The Roman army reflected the Roman economic realities, with the heavier demands falling on the upper classes, but even so, there seem to have been enough Romans being forced to fight, especially in this turbulent century, to cause problems.

This is a complex picture, but it seems to hang together. Unfortunately there is a further difficulty caused by the persistence of this nexus of problems throughout the Republic. This means that later writers will inevitably have used their own experiences to color the ways in which they wrote about the more distant past. Whilst there is some truth in this, the fact that there is relatively little major architectural advance in the city in this period is suggestive of a period of genuine difficulty. This would be explicable by a period of some internal and external strife. Although we hear of a few temple

constructions in the fifth and fourth centuries, and there is no reason to doubt them particularly, we see far less development than is visible in sixth-century Rome. Burials were few (a trend shared with Latium, and again perhaps indicative of wider problems). One of the lowest points was the sack of the city in 390 BCE by the Gauls, a band of northern marauders. Damage may have been limited but the memory was a strong and fearful one. It is therefore striking that one of the major developments of the fourth century seems to be the return to whatever sixth-century fortifications existed, and the development of a proper enceinte wall. The fragments of this wall that we see, which are collectively termed the Servian Wall after Servius Tullius, are therefore best interpreted as a mixture of sixth through to fourth century constructions. Yet the wall is also an exceptional index of Rome's strength, even in adversity; the area it encloses, about 426 hectares, makes Rome one of the largest urban settlements in the western Mediterranean.

It is clear that the fourth and third centuries were the crucible in which Roman identity was forged. By 338 BCE, Rome had established secure control over the Latins, and this created the basis of their empire. The Latins were given specific privileges that separated them from other subjugated peoples, and contributed their manpower to the growing Roman army, which was constructed in a manner which permitted its extension. Latins and Romans were both enrolled in colonies, cities that had a watching brief over foreign territory. Rome itself was beginning in the later fourth and third century to recommence programs of public monumentalization. We can see this in a number of parts of the city, and in a number of kinds of construction. Rome's first aqueduct (the Aqua Appia of 312 BCE); the remodeling of the public space around the Comitium in the Forum area; the erection of the speaker's platform, the Rostra, so named after the beaks of ships captured in war; the victory column of C. Duilius of 260 BCE (the triumphal arch as a monumental form would follow shortly); triumphal temples, which continue in sequence from around 300 BCE into the second century BCE, roads, and the port infrastructure, which seems to be the purpose of the huge Porticus Aemilia of 193 BCE. Rome's architecture therefore reflects military success, population growth, and increased commercial activity. What underpinned this growth?

Rome was beginning to engage with neighbors further afield – the Etruscans to the north and the Samnites to the south. As Roman ambition and territory began to expand, Rome came necessarily into contact with the major cultures of the south, the Greeks and the Carthaginians. One of the major catalysts for Rome's determination may have been the invasion by Pyrrhus, who seems to have sought a western empire to match the famous exploits of his relative, Alexander the Great. Pyrrhus's invasion was startling but, in the long run, ineffective. However, his reliance on support from Sicily in the end made that island pivotal in the long battle for supremacy with the Carthaginians; in the

First and Second Punic Wars, Sicily was critical.

This long history of warfare was draining for Rome and for Roman manpower, but the city was never sacked – Hannibal famously turned away. Consequently, the city grew, and victory over southern Italy and Sicily brought riches, new styles of architecture, and new decorative schemes to Rome. Increasingly, the city became the home to competitive building, as victorious generals marked their achievements with the dedication of temples, and Greek statuary became more visible. Just as the Romans incorporated the manpower of defeated enemies, and imitated foreign weaponry and armor when it was advantageous, so the Romans also absorbed, incorporated and imitated foreign architecture and art, symbolically bringing the conquered enemy within the walls. What started as the solemn evocation of a tutelary deity of a defeated city (an event we can identify in only a few cases, for instance at Veii in 396 BCE (Livy 5.22), becomes, when Rome moves into the Greek world, the plundering of an artistic inheritance. When Marcellus conquered Syracuse in the Second Punic War (212 BCE) he carried off much of its wealth to Rome. When Fulvius Flaccus stripped the roof of the temple of Juno Lacinia in southern Italy to adorn his temple in 174/3 BCE, the Senate ordered the restitution, and Flaccus died shortly thereafter, allegedly of Juno's anger; but no such scruples prevented L. Mummius's dismemberment of Corinth in 146 BCE. Rome's increasing involvement in the Greek East after the Hannibalic War exaggerated the disjunction between Roman distaste and desire for Greek luxury. This cultural divide was a leitmotif running throughout Roman history.

The challenges and opportunities of warfare solidified the Roman political system. In the face of overwhelming odds, Rome became briefly more unified, and developed a strong militaristic ethos which carried over into its politics. Rome was governed by a relatively small group of families who had already had some success in office-holding. The numbers of elected posts (two consuls, rising numbers of praetors, aediles, and quaestors, ten tribunes of the plebs, and a host of other magistracies, coupled with the prorogation or annual extension of the consuls and praetors to meet military necessities) was allied to a more or less firm sequence, and an expectation hardened into law of the minimum ages at which these offices could be taken (which was of course flouted by the most able). There was thus a genuine career structure, but whilst a few tried to make their way through politics alone, the expectation was always that those elected to office would then lead in military affairs. In the Punic Wars, the result was a high death toll amongst officers as well as men, but in times of greater success, war brought booty, and thus a greater opportunity to enrich oneself and the city, meaning that office became more competitively sought after. Consciously or not, the Romans constructed a cycle in which the desire for office fueled the need for military success, which raised the stakes in electioneering, forcing yet more expansion (see [Table 2.1](#)).

There are signs of this in the second half of the second century BCE, for instance with the simultaneous sack of both Carthage and Corinth, and the intervention in Pergamum after 133 BCE. The spoils of empire went largely to citizens, which, in time, became a problem, since the empire itself was won and run by a mixed population. As internal politics at Rome continually pushed politicians to support, sustain, and rely upon the growing urban population, either by enhancing the expanding city, or by facilitating a return to the countryside at the expense of those living there, Rome’s external politics increasingly relied on the collaboration of Italians. The Social War of 91–87 BCE was a complex affair and not reducible to simple aims, but the outcome at any rate was the spreading of Roman citizenship throughout Italy; the consequence was both the influx of new competitors for at least the lower ranks of political office, and the increasing participation by the towns of Italy in the definition of “Romanness.” This process, which starts from the moment of Roman conquest, is often described with the shorthand term Romanization, but the term must be understood not as the active imposition of Roman ideas on an unwilling subjugated population, but as the intricate playing out of cultural, political, and social ideologies of identity and power, in which the very nature of what it was to be Roman was itself questioned and reshaped. This process can be detected, at each chronological and geographical point and with its own individual and complex dynamic, throughout the Roman Empire.

Table 2.1 Rome’s major wars (mid-fourth century to the end of the first century BCE).

First Samnite War (343–341 BCE)	Third Celtiberian or Numantine War (143–133 BCE)
Latin War (340–338 BCE)	Numidian War (111–106 BCE)
Second Samnite War (327–321, 316–304 BCE)	Cimbrian War (105–101 BCE)
Third Samnite War (298–290 BCE)	First Mithridatic War (88–85 BCE)
War with Pyrrhus (280–275 BCE)	Second Mithridatic War (83–82 BCE)
First Punic War (264–241 BCE)	Third Mithridatic War (74–66 BCE)
First Illyrian War (229–8 BCE)	Pompey’s Eastern Settlement (65–62 BCE)
Second Illyrian War (219 BCE)	Gallic War (58–50 BCE)
Second Punic War (218–201 BCE)	Parthian War (54–53 BCE)
First Macedonian War (214–205 BCE)	Civil War (49–48 BCE)
Second Macedonian War (200–196 BCE)	Egyptian or Alexandrine War (48 BCE)
War with Antiochus (192–189 BCE)	Antony’s Parthian War (40–33 BCE)
First Celtiberian War (181–179 BCE)	Illyrian War (35–28 BCE)
Third Macedonian War (172–169 BCE)	Battle of Actium (31 BCE)

Lusitanian War (154–138 BCE)	Cantabrian Wars (26–19 BCE)
Second Celtiberian War (153–151 BCE)	Gallic Settlement (16–13 BCE)
Third Punic War (149–146 BCE)	Pannonian War (16–12 BCE)
Sack of Corinth (146 BCE)	German War (12–9 BCE)

Returning to the architecture of the city, the second century BCE continues trends identified earlier. We begin to see already in the second century, and accelerating in the first century BCE, how the temples, vowed from the spoils of victory by individual commanders and situated lining the route whereby the Roman triumphal procession entered the city, became themselves part of the competitive atmosphere, as individuals restored temples built by their own ancestors, thus proclaiming both individual and inherited virtue. The population of the city appears to have exploded in the first century BCE, with all the attendant problems of infrastructure. It is also a time of architectural innovation, of experimentation with space and decoration, and of the increasing influence of Greek models, whilst we also see architectural reflections of a growing regard for (and indeed perhaps invention of) the Roman past. M. Fulvius Nobilior's temple of Hercules and the Muses, sometime after 189 BCE, celebrates both the Roman past through the alleged preservation of a shrine from the time of King Numa in the eighth century BCE. As the temples of Victoria and Magna Mater (an imported eastern deity) began to occupy parts of the Palatine, older hut foundations may have been carefully moved, and then become part of a story of Roman continuity. Both the earliest basilicas and the series of up to a dozen porticoes along the lines of Greek *stoai* show a different cultural affinity, and the best index of how architecture now represented a focus of display and disagreement is shown by the continuing refusal by the Roman authorities to permit the construction of a permanent stone theatre, which was an architectural form often associated with democracy.

The intensity of political conflict dominates the last century of the Republic, but it rested on the combination of a military dynamic and a massive urban population, as Rome's demographic soared towards one million people. We see the conflict at an incredibly detailed level through the works of Cicero, an eyewitness to, and a player in, the key moments. Roman history becomes the history of a few individuals. Caesar and Pompey each strive for supremacy on the back of vast military conquests (Pompey in the east, Caesar in Gaul) and reshaping of the city of Rome (Pompey's theatre, Caesar's reconstructions in the Forum and Campus Martius, and ultimately a completely new Forum). Caesar's victory was short-lived; he was assassinated in 44 BCE, heralding a struggle over his legacy, which was won by his nephew, Octavian, who was renamed Augustus. For our understanding of the city, this late-Republican phase tends to be most marked by the huge building projects, which were themselves partly encouraged by a somewhat dilapidated and inadequate city

infrastructure; what we tend to miss archaeologically is the huge growth of the city's lower-class accommodation. We know that jerry-built ramshackle insula-type buildings, with several floors of accommodation above shops must have spread rapidly through the city, leading to fire hazards, increased demands on infrastructure such as water, and the general crowding of the city. Whilst to the north, gardens and open space remained, some part of the larger villa complexes of the elite, areas like the Subura not far from the Forum were, by all accounts, crowded and tense. This growing contrast between sophisticated urban spaces, such as the Forum or the great Campus Martius complexes, expensive if cramped town houses for the elite near the great political spaces of the Forum and Palatine, villas in the countryside, and slums in the center, is the product of the social and political forces of the late Republic, but characterized the imperial city too, and it is what makes Rome seem so modern in its urban form.

Towards Monarchy

The apparent inevitability of the Roman political descent into monarchy is often assumed; the Republic has been described as a “crisis without alternative,” and its last century as a sequence of crises, each one sapping away a little more of the capacity of the Republic to survive. This is partly the result of having the Ciceronian evidence. This political narrative is important and, of course, to some extent true, but it is also vital to incorporate three key story lines. First, the growth of the city population, and especially the growth of the numbers of citizen voters within it, rendered traditional politics increasingly less plausible. Second, the importance of Italy cannot be overlooked. Each of the great leaders looked to Italy: Pompey claimed to have been able to summon legions by stamping his foot; Caesar's veterans came from all over Italy; Octavian garnered huge support from Italy, which Antony squandered in his eastern adventures with Cleopatra. Third, the empire was an essential component of the future. In their own way, each of the great leaders of the late Republic realized that the empire was a problem that needed to be solved. Caesar and Pompey sought to expand the empire – it was alleged that Caesar had the east in his sights before his death. The Alexander-like obsession with conquest masked the nervous contemplation of the consequence of retraction, and arguably it was Augustus who saw this most clearly; by all accounts a reluctant fighter, he spent much of his early life pacifying and bringing the empire to heel, and much of his later life preventing others from benefiting from it. Augustus brought to an end both the pursuit of conquest for its own sake, and the concept of the empire as the property of the *res publica*. His brilliant solution of making parts of the empire the emperor's own property (amongst them the immensely wealthy

province of Egypt) not only removed temptation, but also shored up his own position. It was a solution which endured long beyond his own dynasty.

If Roman history changes after the Republic it is not just because we lose Cicero (executed by Mark Antony in revenge for his too-successful oratorical destruction of Antony's character). It is also because, to some extent, politics was never the same again. The Senate continued to meet, and elections continued to be held, for a while, but meant less; one of the reasons for Augustus's early unpopularity was that he held a consulship repeatedly, and one of his early reforms was to acquire consular power, which left the office open to two people a year, as in the past. There was still an elite at Rome who sought advancement for personal pride and recognition, but the stakes were lower. Henceforth, and perhaps to the relief of many, the whole empire had only one person to look to, the emperor. Italy became more peaceful, and Rome became more predictably understandable. Prosperity did indeed follow.

Nowhere perhaps was this more true than in the city of Rome, and here again we see how inextricably linked were the fortunes of the city and those of the empire. From Augustus on, Rome became the focus of imperial expenditure and attention, and within the city, the emperor became the focus of popular expectation. Famously, Augustus claimed to have found the city made in brick and left it marble (Suet. *Aug.* 28.3); his intervention in the city was pervasive and highly visible, from his massive mausoleum to his envelopment of the old civic spaces with self-referential Augustan architecture and architectural restoration. Even when he did not act (his restoration of the Basilica Aemilia was said to have left it recognizably Aemilian; his house was, allegedly, humble) it was conspicuous. The impact of Augustus was enormous. By the end of his reign, one could stand in the old Republican Forum, and look down at an Augustan-period pavement, and around at basilicas, two imperial fora, one explicitly celebrating the Julian clan, triumphal arches, a monument to the Divine Julius Caesar, a portico for Augustus's grandchildren, a restored Rostra and Curia, and a clutch of restored temples, all of which could be regarded as Augustan, whilst on the Palatine, Augustus's humble house, sat flanked by temples of Victory and Apollo, as well as a preserved hut which allegedly once housed Romulus. Out in the city, the largest mausoleum known in the ancient world, a broad piazza which functioned as a celebration of Augustan achievements, obelisks reflecting the victory over the east, infrastructural developments such as the Stagnum Agrippae which appears to have contributed to water distribution, and a rash of statuary and other decorative architecture such as the Ara Pacis, all proclaimed the new world.

Imperial Rome

Augustus's successors were less encumbered by the past. The length of Augustus's reign secured more than anything else the absence of a viable alternative. Throughout the first century CE people talked about the Republic, but it was never really clear what that meant or how it might have been achieved. When a crisis came with the end of the Julio-Claudian dynasty, the answer was a bloody battle to find a new emperor. That emperor, Vespasian, heralded another dynasty. Interestingly, part of Vespasian's story would be the rejection of the urban design of Nero, which focused on his house, in favor of the architecture of urban infrastructure, notably the Colosseum.

For the Julio-Claudian emperors, the focus seems to have been on the development of an architecture of power and palatial splendor. It is important to remember that Claudius also built the great harbor at Portus, and that investment and support for the provinces was also taking place, but for senatorial and hostile historians it was the excessive splendor of private architecture at Rome that attracted attention and censure. Tiberius built the first great palace, but it was Nero who took this to its furthest extreme. His vast complex, which stretched from the Oppian to the Palatine and included suites of rooms, a lake, statues, artificial landscaping and so on, raised resentment; perhaps even more so because it was possible in part because of the great fire of 64 CE which left much of the city in ruins. At the same time, it does appear to have been one of the greatest and most remarkable collections of art and display; the surviving fragments of marble opus sectile and other indications are stunning. It is all the more noticeable, therefore, that when the dynasty fell, Vespasian destroyed much of the Golden House, transforming the huge statue of Nero into one of Apollo, and creating a huge amphitheater for the entertainment of the Roman people. Whilst the Flavians were also capable of displays of dynastic achievement (Temple of Peace, Arch of Titus) and personal power (Domitian's palace on the Palatine), they represent the constant tensions between the need to support the city's infrastructure, and to sustain Rome's appearance.

Whilst the empire united around the system which delivered stability and anchors of security, and identified with Rome, so Rome became increasingly diverse and complex as it reflected the vast wealth and heterogeneity of empire within its own boundaries. Anything could be found at Rome from anywhere in the empire. Opus sectile floors with marble from across the Mediterranean, markets with produce from Africa, India, and all places in between, slave markets, spectacles of gladiators and animals, were all to be found at Rome, and Roman writers like Pliny the Elder gloried in enumerating the variety that came with empire. The diversity of temples and religious customs grew to match the diversity of the population, which itself brought an unmatched array of interesting illnesses. Galen, the great medical writer, could find almost every remedy at Rome, and more or less every disease.

In the third chapter of his great work on the decline and fall of the Roman

Empire, Gibbon declared the period between Domitian and Commodus to be one in which “the condition of the human race was most happy and prosperous.” The provinces were more or less secure, and the city of Rome was securely provisioned through the great harbor at Portus, revisited by Trajan who constructed the still-visible hexagonal harbor. Together with Ostia, Portus was part of a vast infrastructure of supply, and Italy was, more or less, prospering. The evidence from Pompeii and Herculaneum, destroyed in 79 CE, is our best guide to urban life outside the center; it shows a combination, both touching and vivid, of municipal taste (and perhaps the absence of it, from time to time), of local adaptation to specific conditions, the damage caused in this instance by earlier seismic activity in 62 CE, and intriguing hints as to the role of freedmen in society. Local patrons, individual storylines, and the interaction of slaves and free are the bedrock on which imperial society developed from Narbonne to North Shields, from Brindisi to Begram. The city of Rome acquired under the Severans some of its most impressive monuments, for instance the baths of Caracalla.

The monumental architecture of the second and third century CE, coupled with the spread of statuary, original or copied, the widespread use of inscriptions on public monuments and personal funerary contexts, and the export of a Roman model of urbanism across a largely settled empire, makes this one of the most interesting periods for the development of urban form. It is also a highly diverse and adventurous period, both in terms of particular monuments – Trajan’s Column, with its elaborate internal staircase, in the enormous Trajanic Forum, the great dome of the Pantheon, the vast world in miniature of Hadrian’s villa, the astonishing physical achievements of the Baths of Caracalla (which, it has been estimated, required between 12,000 and 20,000 men over four to six years, moving half a million cubic meters of clay to create the artificial terrace, and moving columns that weighed as much as 100 tons) – and in terms of the subjects. This is the period when eastern and Egyptian deities in particular begin to receive particular attention; Isis, Sarapis, Sol Elagabalus to name but three. For all the turmoil and unrest, Rome remained a remarkably rich and imposing city – a symbol of power. Just one building might stand for all; the Severan Septizodium, a vast three-storey edifice near the Palatine, monumental and no doubt fantastically decorated, which, as far as one can tell, had no real function at all except to be a decorative and imposing fountain in the contemporary eastern Greek fashion.

This narrative is important because it helps us to understand the most challenging feature of Roman imperial history: how, when in the third century the challenges to the empire become so fierce, and when the emperors came and went with bewildering rapidity, did the whole thing hang together (see [Tables 2.2](#) and [2.3](#))? One can write a narrative of insecurity and decline. There are clear signs of economic difficulty in the debasement of coinage, for instance, and of imperial retrenchment and retreat, perhaps best symbolized

by the emperor Valerian serving as the footstool for the Sasanid king, Shapur I. It is also shown in Palmyra’s brief secession, and the sort of epistemic insecurity which both gave space for the development of alternative eschatological stories, such as Manichaeism and Christianity, and the impetus for their persecution, for instance, by Decius. Yet there are also reasons for seeing this as a period of remarkable invention and the successful survival of an entity which for all that it changed was still recognizably the Roman Empire. Recent work on the comparisons between the Roman and the Han Empire might be taken to encourage the view that Rome successfully forestalled its break-up into separate areas with the institution of the tetrarchy by Diocletian, and then the reunification under Constantine.

Table 2.2 Key dates in Roman history, imperial period.

The Roman wars of the imperial period are often of long duration and hard to summarize; Rome’s conflict, for instance, with the Parthians, and then the Sasanians who take control of the area, lasts on and off for the whole of the imperial period. What follows are some key dates (all CE):

9	German tribes led by Arminius defeat Roman legions under Varus
43	Conquest of Britain under Claudius
60	Boudicca’s revolt in Britain; put down in 61
66–73	Jewish Revolt against Romans
100–106	Trajan’s Dacian War
122–127	Hadrian’s Wall built in Britain
132–135	Jewish Revolt against Romans
168–175	Marcus Aurelius campaigns against Germanic tribes
226	Sasanians replace Parthians in the East
251	Goths defeat and kill Emperor Decius
259	Sasanians defeat and kill Emperor Valerian
268–273	Palmyrene revolt, put down by Emperor Aurelian
284	Diocletian divides empire
312	Constantine reunites empire in west
324	Constantine becomes sole emperor
337	Empire divided between Constantine’s sons

378	Goths defeat and kill Emperor Valens at Hadrianopolis
383	Roman army begins withdrawal from Britain
388	Empire reunited under Theodosius I
395	Empire permanently divided between East and West
410	Goths sack Rome; Roman army completely withdrawn from Britain and Gaul
455	Vandals sack Rome under Gaeseric
476	Odoacer declares himself King of Italy.

Table 2.3 Rome’s Emperors (simplified).

<i>Year (CE)</i>	<i>Emperor</i>
27 BCE–14	Augustus
14–37	Tiberius
37–41	Gaius (Caligula)
41–54	Claudius
54–68	Nero
68	C. Julius Vindex
68	L. Clodius Macer
68–69	Galba
	C. Nymphidius Sabinus
69	Otho
69	Vitellius
69–79	Vespasianus
79–81	Titus
81–96	Domitianus
89	L. Antonius Saturninus
96–98	Nerva
98–117	Trajan
117–138	Hadrian
138–161	Antoninus Pius
161–180	Marcus Aurelius
175	Avidius Cassius (usurper)
161–166	L. Verus
180–192	Commodus
192–193	Pertinax
193	Didius Julianus
193–211	Septimius Severus
193–194	Pescennius Niger (proclaimed emperor but defeated)

193–197	Clodius Albinus (proclaimed emperor but defeated)
211–217	Antoninus (Caracalla)
211	Geta
217–218	Macrinus
218	Diadumenianus
218–22	Elagabalus
	Seleucus
	Uranus
	Gellius Maximus
222–235	Severus Alexander
235–238	Maximinus Thrax
238	Gordian I
	Gordian II
	Pupienus (Maximus) (proclaimed joint emperor by senate; murdered)
	Balbinus (proclaimed joint emperor by senate; murdered)
238–244	Gordian III
240	Sabinianus (usurper)
244–249	Philip the Arab
248	Pacatianus (usurper)
248	Iotapianus (usurper)
	Silbannacus (usurper)
	Sponsianus (usurper)
249–251	Decius
250	L.Priscus (usurper)
250	Iulius Valens Licinianus (usurper)
251	Herennius Etruscus (co-emperor)
251	Hostilian
251–253	Trebonianus Gallus
	Volusianus
253	Uranus Antoninus
253	Aemilian
253–260	Valerian
253–268	Gallienus
260	Ingenuus
260	Regalianus
260–261	Macrianus Senior
260–261	Macrianus Iunior
260–261	Quietus
261	Piso
261	Valens
261	Ballista

261	Mussius Aemilianus
262	Memor
262–268	Aureolus
	Celsus
	Saturninus
268–270	Claudius II Gothicus
	Censorinus
270	Quintillus
270–275	Aurelian
271–272	Domitianus
271–272	Urbanus
271–272	Septimius
273	Firmus
270–271?	Felicissimus
272	Vaballathus
260–274	Gallic Emperors
260–269	Postumus
269	Laelianus
269	Marius
269–270	Victorinus
271–274	Tetricus I
273?–274	Tetricus II
273	Faustinus
275–276	Tacitus
276	Florianus
276–282	Probus
280	Bonosus
280–281	Proculus
281	Saturninus
282–283	Carus
283–284	Numerianus
283–285	Carinus
284–305	Diocletian
295	L. Domitius Domitianus
297–298	Aurelius Achilleus
303	Eugenius
285–c. 310	Maximianus Herculus
285	Amandus
285	Aelianus
	Iulianus
286?–297?	Imperatori britannici
286/7–293	Carausius
293–296/7	Allectus
293–306	Constantius I Chlorus

293–311	Galerius
305–313	Maximinus Daia
305–307	Severus II
306–312	Maxentius
308–309	L. Domitius Alexander
308–324	Licinius
314–(316?)	Valens
324	Martinianus
306–337	Costantinus I
333/334	Calocaerus
337–340	Costantinus II
337–350	Costans I
337–361	Costantius II
350–353	Magnentius
350	Nepotian
350	Vetranio
355	Silvanus
361–363	Julianus
363–364	Jovianus
364–375	Valentinianus I
375	Firmus
364–378	Valens
365–366	Procopius
366	Marcellus
367–383	Gratian
375–392	Valentinianus II
378–395	Theodosius I
383–388	Magnus Maximus
384–388	Flavius Victor
392–394	Eugenius
From this point on, only the western emperors are listed	
393–423	Honorius
423–425	Joannes
425–455	Valentinian III
455	Petronius Maximus
455–6	Avitus
457–461	Majorian
461–465	Libius Severus
467–472	Anthemius
472	Olybrius
473–4	Glycerius
474–480	Julius Nepos
	Romulus Augustulus (deposed 476)

For Rome's symbolic value – the way it had become a metaphor which supported the reproduction of local power networks – and its sheer ideological weight carried the empire forwards even whilst emperors languished in foreign courts, and usurpers sprang up from all corners. Rome was greater than its specific imperial instantiation, the emperor, because it had developed a culture of unity and a structure of administration which had its own hard-won and much-tested logic. It is, in fact, not paradoxical that the system relied heavily on slaves and freedmen from all over the empire; it is precisely the logic of a system that was so totalizing in its extent that no part of the empire could not be incorporated. Even the Christians were only sporadically persecuted. It is striking that it is a Greek historian (Dio Cassius) who is our best source for senatorial disquiet at the actions of the African emperor (Septimius Severus) who, amongst other things, settled German and Pannonian cavalry just outside the city.

The late third and early fourth century saw huge reforming activity in the provinces, in the army, and in the economy. Rome did not stand still; the Aurelian walls may be taken as a sign of visible authority (as well as defensive concern), and Aurelian also built a great temple to Sol as a response to military victory. The third century sees both traditionalism in the restoration of old buildings, and innovation in the creation of new ones, and the scale continues to grow; witness the enormous basilica begun by Maxentius early in the fourth century, of which only a third survives and yet which still dominates the upper stretch of the Via Sacra. Similar, massive interventions can be found elsewhere from Trier to Constantinople. One of the most innovative changes at Rome comes with Constantine's conversion to Christianity, which heralds the creation of a new architectural form, the basilica church. The basilica at the Lateran was created on top of (and partially preserves) the Severan barracks mentioned above; the basilica at St. Peter's enclosed a tomb believed to be that of the apostle and a whole suite of other burials too. In an extraordinary volte-face of imperial behavior, Christianity became the imperial religion, having profound consequences in some ways, and surprisingly little impact in others. For Rome, Christianity would come to be a critical factor in urban renewal and government. Rome itself was increasingly surrounded by churches, shrines, and tombs. The great basilica churches pulled the center of Rome away from the Forum, and this had profound consequences on Roman topography for centuries to come. When one looks at maps of Renaissance Rome, one can see how St. Peter's pulls the architecture of the city into the Campus Martius, leaving the south and east of the Forum area largely open fields.

Decline and Fall?

One of the liveliest debates at present in ancient history is over the nature of the “decline and fall” of the Roman Empire. In 410 CE, Rome was sacked by a vigorous, ambitious leader from the north called Alaric, who had welded different tribes into a substantial fighting force, and sources like St. Augustine report this as a terrible shock. Yet in 364 Valentinian had already indicated that there was no need for more resources to be wasted on public building in Rome. Whilst the sack did relatively little damage, building continued afterwards, and notwithstanding further oddities (for instance, the fact that Rome was ruled by a German, Odoacer, who had deposed the last emperor, Romulus Augustulus, in 476) the Colosseum was being repaired as late as 508. The decline of imperial Rome is also the transformation of the city into a papal state. Power shifted decisively and permanently eastward to Byzantium in the sixth century CE, and the empire was split. It is impossible to deny the fact that fifth-century Rome, and the western empire, are dwindling – Roman provincial administration of Britain, for instance, ended in 410 CE, and there are all sorts of signs of the diminution of luxury and of intellectual life and previous forms of governance. The investment in the empire as guarantee of stability was fading fast, but the new rulers imitated what they found. Rome’s symbolic capital remained high for centuries to come.

Guide to Further Reading

For a historical overview with a focus on the development of Rome, see Claridge (2010). Coulston and Dodge (2000) remains a very useful collection of essays. For early Roman history, see Cornell (1995). Smith (1996) sets the archaeological developments at Rome within the broader Latin context. For a more recent account of the architecture of early Rome, see Cifani (2007), and for a summary of recent but highly controversial finds in the Forum and Palatine area, see Carandini (2011).

On the problems surrounding the sources for early Rome, see Ogilvie and Drummond (1989), Cornell (1995), Wiseman (2008).

For a useful collection of essays on the Roman Republic, see Rosenstein and R. Morstein (2006), which includes an excellent chapter by J. Patterson on the city of Rome. For the middle Republic and its temple-building, see Ziolkowski (1992), and more broadly, Sewell (2010). For the collapse of the Republic and the establishment of the Augustan regime, Syme (1939) remains invaluable but may be supplemented now by Wallace-Hadrill (2008). There are several biographies of the key figures, amongst which Seager (1994) and Meier (1995) remain useful. For the period of transition, see now Osgood (2006). For the phrase “crisis without alternative” see Meier in Raaflaub and Toher (1990), 54–70. For Roman militarism and its consequences, Harris (1985) and Rosenstein (2003).

Excellent accounts of the city of Rome and its urban population are given by Purcell (1994) for the late Republic and Purcell (1996) for the early empire. For Augustan Rome, see Zanker (1988), Lewandowski *et al.* (1988), Favro (1996), and Haselberger (2002). For difficult living conditions in the city of Rome see Purcell (1994) and Scobie (1986). On Nero's Golden House, see now Tomei and Rea (2011); for the Flavians see Coarelli (2009). For Trajan's Forum, see Packer (1987); for Trajan's Column see Galinier (2007). For the Pantheon see Marder and Wilson Jones (2015). For Hadrian's Villa, see MacDonald and Pinto (1995). For the Baths of Caracalla, see Delaine (1997).

For the development of Italy and its contribution to Rome, see Bispham (2007), and Patterson (2006) is an outstanding survey. For Rome's mix of cultures, see Edwards and Woolf (2003). For the interplay of different urban cultures see Revell (2009).

For the history of the transformations of the Roman Empire, the best single-volume account is Potter (2004). On architecture, see Thomas (2007b) and Wilson-Jones (2000). For the Severans, see Swain, Harrison and Elsner (2007); for the Septizodium see Thomas 2007a. On Galen see Mattern (2013). On Rome and China see Scheidel (ed.) (2009).

For the "end of Rome," two very different accounts, but both hugely enjoyable, are Ward-Perkins (2006) and Wickham (2009). Heather (2005; 2009) are exhaustive and argumentative. For Rome, in late antiquity and beyond, Krautheimer (1980) remains illuminating.

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PART II

THE URBAN LANDSCAPE

CHAPTER THREE

A City of Stories

T.P. Wiseman

The editors have asked me for a chapter on “myth in the cityscape.” But which cityscape, when? The city of Rome was constantly changing and developing; the political community of the Romans, and therefore the stories that mattered to it, changed and developed as well. So I have tried to imagine what the impact of the city may have been on five different Greek visitors, at various times, from the age of Tarquin to the age of Augustus. Each of the speakers is a historically attested person, and in four of the five cases (the earliest can only be an educated guess) their presence in Rome is historically attested too: the evidence is listed at the end of each item. I have assumed that these people thought, and spelt, in Greek.

The Trader: Eumakhos of Milētos, c. 525 BCE

It’s a long haul up the river to this place, but the business is worth the effort. They call the town Rhōmē, “Strength,” and it’s certainly populous, with a busy market next to the timber bridge. Many of the houses are still thatched, but there are plenty of sizeable stone buildings.

For instance, just next to the harbor there’s a new temple to Tychē with a fine *akrotērion* on the roof showing Athēnē escorting Hēraklēs to Olympos. The story they tell is that the town was founded by an Arkadian exile called Euandros; that’s why the hill behind is called Pallantion, after his native town. His mother was some kind of Sibyl, and when Hēraklēs came to the new settlement, driving Geryoneus’s cattle back to Argos, she foretold that he would become a god. So Euandros set up the great altar of Hēraklēs which is just south of the market area.

Beyond the Hēraklēs altar is a valley where the present *tyrannos*, who claims descent from the Bakchiadai of Korinthos, has instituted an agonistic festival for Poseidon Hippios, imitating the Isthmian Games. In fact, he’s more a Tyrrhēnian than a Hellene. The Tyrrhēnoi and Latinoi are neighbors, of course, though they speak quite different languages; the river separates them, and what makes Rhōmē important is that it’s a crossroads, where the river-valley route up into the mountainous interior crosses the way south from Tyrrhēnia through the land of the Latinoi to the Hellenic cities by the Mixing-

bowl Gulf. (That was the way Hēraklēs went, to fight the Giants near Kymē, just north of the Mixing-bowl.) Several ambitious Tyrrhēnoi have tried to control the town, but the Latinoi have kept their independence. My host, a man of influence called Valesios, tells me they are not too happy with the present incumbent, but it seems to me that his power and wealth have made Rhōmē deserve its pretentious name.

His predecessor was supposedly an ex-slave. On the hill beyond the valley, outside the town's sacred boundary, is the handsome temple he built for Artemis, with an old-fashioned wooden cult-image imitating the one the Phōkaioi have set up at Massilia. It was an attempt by the previous *tyrannos* to take business away from the old cult-center of the Latinoi, in the forest by the lake they call the Mirror of Artemis, where Hippolytus is supposed to be hidden. These rulers of Rhōmē are doing their best to claim the leadership of the Latinoi.

That is most apparent on the north side of the market area, where there's a steep-sided hill suitable for an *akropolis*. Below it is a shrine to the prophetess I mentioned, who is called the goddess Karmentis (*karmen* in the local dialect means song, or spell, or prophecy), but on the summit they're laying the foundations for what they claim will be the greatest temple in the west. It is for Zeus, and the god will look out directly at his old communal cult site on top of Mount Albanos – more as a challenge than as homage, you might think. They say the god has given them a sign: a human head was discovered as they cleared the site, as if to show it will be the head of everything.

Between the “Head-hill” and Pallantion is another valley, its stream artificially channeled to provide a dry area for their *agora*. There are two important cult sites here, on the slope of the “Head-hill” overlooking the *agora*. One is for Hēphaistos, where the *tyrannos* has his platform for addressing the people, and the other is for Kronos, because they say he came to the land of the Latinoi after being expelled from Olympos. *Latēre* in their language means to hide, and this is where the god came to escape from Zeus – but he won't be able to hide much longer, when Zeus is in the great new temple just above him. Kronos has always liked human sacrifice, but that doesn't happen here nowadays. They say Hēraklēs changed the custom when he came through on that occasion, so now their priests (“bridge-builders” is the local word for them) throw substitute men of straw into the river from the timber bridge once a year.

On the other side of the *agora*, below the slope of Pallantion on the side away from the river harbor, is an old temple of Hestia, really no more than a round thatched house, but containing an altar on which the virgin priestesses keep a fire perpetually burning. Close by is a shrine containing some old-fashioned bronze shields, one of which (the rest are copies) they say fell from heaven as a gift from Zeus to their king long ago. Next to that is the house of the *tyrannos*, appropriately substantial with a garden court surrounded by wooden

columns.

Like all *tyrannoi*, he's working fast to build a center of power. I wonder if he'll last long enough to see his grandiose plans to completion, or whether Valesios and his fellow-barons will cut him down to size. It'll make a difference to trade, if they do.

Evidence

Eumakhos, known from a dedication at Gravisca: *SEG* 32.998. His home city is a guess: cf. Solin 1981 on the names in the Gravisca dedications.

Fortuna (Tyche) temple: Sommella Mura 1981, Holloway 1994, 68–80, Pisani Sartorio 1995; statue group (*akrotērion*) illustrated in (e.g.) Cornell 1995, 149, Wiseman 2004, 29.

Evander and Hercules: Livy 1.7.4–14, Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 1.31–3 and 39–43, Ov. *Fast.* 1.461–586. Palatine from Pallantion: Livy 1.5.1, Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 1.31.4.

Tarquinius (“the present *tyrannos*”) as Corinthian: Cic. *Rep.* 2.34, Livy 1.34, Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 3.46. Servius Tullius as ex-slave: Cic. *Rep.* 2.37, Livy 1.39–41, Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 4.1–5.

Games in the valley: Cic. *Rep.* 2.36, Livy 1.35.9 (attributed to the first Tarquin). “Equestrian Neptune”: Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 1.33.2 (attributed to Evander); Livy 1.9.6, Plut. *Rom.* 14.3 (attributed to Romulus). Isthmian Games parallel: Zevi 1995, 308–9.

Hercules and the Giants: Diod. Sic. 4.21.5–7.

Bay of Naples as the “Mixing-bowl”: Strabo *Geog.* 5.4.3 (C242).

Valesios: *CIL* I² 2832a (his inscription at Satricum); Holloway 1994, 149–55, Cornell 1995, 143–5.

Aventine outside the *pomerium*: Gell. *NA* 13.14.4–6. Servius Tullius's Diana temple on the Aventine: Varro, *Ling.* 5.43, Livy 1.45.2, Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 4.26.4–5. Massilia model: Strabo *Geog.* 4.1.5 (C180).

Diana at Nemi: Strabo *Geog.* 5.3.12 (C239–40), *CIL* I² 1480, 2444. Mirror: Servius on Verg. *Aen.* 7.515–16. Hippolytus: Verg. *Aen.* 7.761–80, Ov. *Met.* 15.497–546.

Carmentis shrine: Livy 5.47.2, Verg. *Aen.* 8.337–41, Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 1.32.2.

Temple of Capitoline Jupiter: Tagliamonte 1996. Jupiter on Mons Albanus: Varro, *Ling.* 6.25, Cic. *Mil.* 85, Livy 21.63.8, Strabo *Geog.* 5.3.2 (C229). Head portent: Varro, *Ling.* 5.41, Livy 1.55.5–6, 5.54.7, Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.*

4.59–61.

Volcanal (Vulcan = Hephaistos): Coarelli 1999c. Temple and altar of Saturn (Kronos): Coarelli 1999b.

Latium from *latere*: Verg. *Aen.* 8.319–29, Ov. *Fast.* 1.235–40. Human sacrifice: Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 1.38, Ov. *Fast.* 5.625–32, Macrobi. *Sat.* 1.7.28–31.

Vesta's round temple: Ov. *Fast.* 6.257–300, Plut. *Numa* 11.1.

Shield from heaven: Ov. *Fast.* 3.259–392, Plut. *Numa* 13. Kept in the Regia (*sacrarium Martis*): Servius on Verg. *Aen.* 7.603 and 8.3.

House of the Tarquins: Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 4.2.4, Livy 1.56.4 (columns); Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 4.63.1, Ov. *Fast.* 2.703–8 (garden).

The Lawgiver: Hermodoros of Ephesos, c. 450 BCE

They are wise to commission a law-code, these Rhōmaioi. Their *tyrannoi* made them rich and powerful, but now, two generations after the expulsion, they're in danger of losing it all. That grand temple of Zeus on the "Head-hill" is certainly magnificent, but it was the *tyrannos* who got it built, and without his resources it's an expensive cult to keep up.

In the first flush of enthusiasm after the rising, they built two impressive temples of their own. The one in the *agora* is for the Dioskouroi, who they say came and fought for them against the other Latinoi in the great war when the *tyrannos* was trying to re-establish himself. The spring next to it is where Kastor and Polydeukes were seen watering their sweating horses before news of the battle had even reached the town. Naturally, the *hippeis* claim the victory was due to the cavalry, and they like to parade at the temple on horseback each year, to make their point.

The other new temple is on the south side of the valley where they hold the games for Poseidon Hippios. It's a joint cult for Dēmētēr, Dionysos, and a goddess who seems to be Ariadnē or Semelē, or perhaps Persephonē. Her name in the dialect of the Latinoi is Libera, just as that of Dionysos is Liber; the word means "free," and I expect they borrowed the idea from the Athenians, whose cult of Dionysos Eleuthereus also recalls the expulsion of *tyrannoi*. But like the Athenians, the Rhōmaioi have discovered that freedom from one-man rule means one thing for the *dēmos* and something else for the wealthy few.

The grandfathers of the present annual magistrates, Horatios and Valesios, were both involved in the rising against the *tyrannos*. They naturally assumed that power would devolve to men like themselves, big landowners whose

tenants and followers give them the power to have their own way. But the *dēmos* had other ideas, and set up a magistracy of its own to protect ordinary citizens from exploitation by the rich and powerful. It's a familiar situation, democrats and oligarchs striving to control the *polis*. The temple of Dēmētēr, Dionysos and the other goddess is where the *dēmos* keeps the record of its own resolutions; so perhaps the other goddess is indeed Persephonē, a law-giving deity like her mother.

The effect of this constant conflict between the many and the few has been to weaken the *polis* and make it vulnerable to aggressive neighbors. The defenses of the town are not particularly strong: Horatios tells the story of his uncle having to hold an entire Tyrrhenian army at bay on the timber bridge single-handed, until they could cut it down behind him. When I was sacrificing at the Artemis temple (she is the goddess of my native city), I was told that the horns that hang on the walls are those of a portentous cow which signified power over Italy. The animal was born up-country in the land of the Sabinoi, and the portent was only diverted to Rhōmē by a trick. But they can't rely on that sort of luck, or the Dioskouroi turning up at every battle. They need civic concord, with everyone fighting for the same goal. That's why a law-code is essential.

Evidence

Hermodorus of Ephesus, drafter of the Twelve Tables: Plin. *HN* 34.21, Pompon. *Dig.* 1.2.2.4.

Castor temple: Nielsen [1993](#). Castor and Pollux at the battle of Lake Regillus and in the Forum: Cic. *Nat. D.* 1.28, Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 6.13.1–3, Val. Max. 1.8.1, Plut. *Coriol.* 3.4. Parade of *equites*: Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 6.13.4.

Temple of Ceres, Liber and Libera: Coarelli [1993b](#). Libera: Cic. *Verr.* 2.4.106, Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 6.17.2 (Persephone); Ov. *Fast.* 3.509–12 (Ariadne).

Liber and Dionysus Eleuthereus: Wiseman [2008](#), 136–9.

Horatius and Valerius, consuls in Year One of the Republic: Livy 2.7–8; Wiseman [2008](#), 308–12.

Ceres temple as an archive: Livy 3.55.13, Pompon. *Dig.* 1.2.2.21. Demeter and Persephone as lawgivers (*thesmophoroi*): Ar. *Thesm.* 297–8.

Horatius at the bridge: Polybius 6.55, Livy 2.10, Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 5.23–5.

Portentous cow at the Diana temple: Plut. *Quaest. Rom.* 4. 264. c–d, Livy 1.45.3–7.

The Ambassador: Kineas of Thessalia, 280 BCE

King Pyrrhos already knows that these people are formidable, but he'll be surprised to hear how impressive their city is. I suppose one should have expected it after seeing those colonial settlements with the land divided in rectangles, and those engineered roads with the bridges over the torrents; but even so, the city walls are astonishing. Thirty cubits high with a circuit of 60 *stadia*, the equal of anything I have seen in Hellas, they are striking evidence for the resources of the Rhōmaioi in both men and material.

One of the gates is decorated with the bronze head of a man with horns. This records a portent that happened “in the time of our ancestors,” as they say here: a commander called Genoukios was returning from campaign when he discovered he had grown horns. The Tyrrhenian *hēpatoskopoi* told him that if he entered the city he would become its king. He covered the horns with a laurel wreath, called for an assembly of the *dēmos* outside the gate, and told the citizens that if ever a horned man tried to enter, they must kill him. Then he took off the wreath and rode away into exile.

There are still tensions between the *dēmos* and the *eupatridai* (*patrikioi* is the local term), but the successful outcome of long wars against the other barbarian peoples of Italy has given their energies a common purpose. On the edge of the hill overlooking the river harbor is a fine new temple of Nikē, positioned like the Nikē temple on the Athenian *akropolis*, next to a fortified way up to the hill and above a cave of Pan. The cave is where the Rhōmaioi say their founding heroes were suckled by a she-wolf, as shown in a bronze statue-group recently erected there. At the top of the hill, just below the temple, is a sacred precinct containing an old-fashioned thatched hut, which is where they say Rhemos and Rhōmylos grew up. The altar next to the hut was erected over an ancient tomb that came to light while the temple was being built; they say Rhemos was killed about the time the city was founded. Perhaps the twin founders are a way of expressing the need for concord between the *dēmos* and the *eupatridai*? Or is it so that one of them can die as a necessary sacrifice, like the Athenian Kodros?

The Rhōmaioi have recently brought under their control a large and fertile area to the north-east, the land of the Sabinoi, who have been incorporated into the citizenship of Rhōmē. This is a remarkable case of history repeating itself, since Rhōmylos, too, fought a notable war against the Sabinoi, whose women he had abducted, and it ended with the merging of the two peoples into one, under the name “Quirites.” Another splendid new temple is a monument of those events, that of Zeus “the Stayer” just above the *agora*. The temple is next to the ancient gate to the Pallantion hill, Rhōmylos's city, because that was where he prayed to Zeus as his men retreated before the Sabinoi, and the god made them stand and fight.

They say the twins were the sons of Arēs, and that the survivor, after a long

and successful reign, was taken bodily up to Olympos. Then he appeared to one of the citizens and announced that his name was no longer Rhōmylos but Quirinos, and they must worship him as a god and practice the arts of war. He picked the spot for his temple on the high ground on the north side of the city, and there it is, decorated (like all these new temples) with spoils from recent conquests. In front of it they have planted a pair of myrtle trees to represent the *dēmos* and the *eupatridai*, another sign of their sense of the need for concord. My own belief is that the founder-hero's new name, and the name of the citizen body to which it evidently refers (Quirinos of the Quirites), are a way of assimilating those Latinoi and Tyrrhēnoi and Sabinoi whom the Rhōmaioi have brought into their own community after conquest or forced alliance; such people may think of themselves as belonging not so much to Rhōmē, the city that defeated them, as to a common enterprise in which together they can defeat others.

Appropriately, they have dedicated to Ares, with an altar, the wide field just outside the city where they train their young men for battle. Recently, too, one of their commanders has set up a temple of Enyō there, a goddess we Hellenes might think of as too savage to honor. Her temple is next to that of Apollo the Healer, and I think that is because their strength in war depends not only on ferocity but also on healthy manpower. They are afraid of no men alive, but they do fear the gods. A few years ago, when they were struck by a devastating plague, they decided that Apollo needed the help of his son, and sent a formal embassy to Epidauros to bring the sacred snake of Asklēpios; they have installed him in a temple on the river island.

King Pyrrhos needs to understand all this. He may defeat their armies, as he did this year at Hērakleia, but they have the means to replace lost armies like the Hydra growing new heads.

Evidence

Kineas: Plut. *Pyrrh.* 14. His embassy to Rome: Plin. *HN* 7.88, Plut. *Pyrrh.* 18.2–4, 19.4–5.

City walls: Holloway [1994](#), 91–102, Andreussi [1996](#), 320–23.

Porta Raudusculana: Varro, *Ling.* 5.163, Festus 338–9L. Genucius Cipus: Ov. *Met.* 15.565–621, Val. Max. 5.6.3.

Temple of Victoria (Nike): Wiseman [1981](#), Pensabene [1999](#). Athenian parallel: Pensabene and D'Alessio [2006](#), 31–3, Wiseman [2008](#), 57.

Lupercal as cave of Pan: Verg. *Aen.* 8.343–4, Livy 1.5.1–2, Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 1.32.3; Wiseman [1995](#), 77–88. Bronze statue-group: Dion. Hal. *Ant.*

Rom. 1.79.8.

Romulus's hut: Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 1.79.11, Ov. *Fast.* 1.199–200, Solinus 1.18; Coarelli 1993a.

Tomb: Pensabene 1998, 59–70, Battistelli 2001, 138–42. Historical interpretations: Wiseman 1995, 120–25, Carandini 1997, 60–61 and 618–22, Carandini 2006, 28–30 and 159–65. It is possible (Angelelli and Falzone 2001: 73–7) that the tomb was part of a Phase IIA necropolis, roughly tenth to ninth century BCE; however, a *skyphos* of the late sixth or early fifth century BCE (Santoro 1989: 964 and tav. IIId) was found in it, and the slab of Monteverde tuff that covered it must have been put in place in the early third century BCE (Battistelli 2001, 142). Perhaps a very early grave was uncovered and re-sanctified on two separate occasions.

Equality of twins: Cassius Hemina fr. 11P, *Origo gentis Romanae* 23.1; Wiseman 1995, 4–6. Remus as sacrifice: Prop. 3.9.50, Flor. 1.1.8; Wiseman 1995, 124–5. Kodros: Justin 2.6.16–21.

Sabines enfranchised, *sine suffragio* in 290 BCE, with full equality in 268 BCE: Vell. Pat. 1.14.6–7. Romulus incorporates Sabines: Servius on Verg. *Aen.* 7.709 (*sine suffragio*); Varro, *Ling.* 6.68, Livy 1.13.4–5, Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 2.46.2–3, Plut. *Rom.* 14.2 (full equality).

Jupiter Stator temple: Livy 1.12.3–7, Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 2.50.3, Plut. *Rom.* 18.6–7.

Romulus deified as Quirinus: Livy 1.16, Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 1.56, Ov. *Fast.* 2.475–512, Plut. *Rom.* 27.3–28.3.

Temple of Quirinus: Livy 10.46.7 (293 BCE); Coarelli 1999a. Myrtle trees: Plin. *HN* 15.120–21. Quirinus and Quirites: Varro, *Ling.* 5.73, Ov. *Fast.* 2.479, Festus (Paulus) 43L.

Altar of Mars: Coarelli 1996. Campus Martius: Livy 2.5.2, Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 5.13.2, Plut. *Publ.* 8.1.

Temple of Bellona (Enyō): Livy 10.19.17–21 (296 BCE); Viscogliosi 1993b.

Temple of Apollo: Livy 4.25.3 (plague, 433 BCE), 40.51.6 (*medicus*); Viscogliosi 1993a, 49.

God-fearing Romans: Sherk 1969, 34.11–15 (193 BCE), 38.22–5 (189–8 BCE); Polybius 6.56.

Plague, Asclepius brought (292 BCE): Livy 10.47.6–7, Ov. *Met.* 15.622–744, Val. Max. 1.8.2.

Rome as the Hydra: Plut. *Pyrrh.* 19.5.

The Rhetorician: Diophanes of Mitylēnē, 133 BCE

Grakkhos was a gifted pupil, and I taught him well, but the Rhōmaioi do not value the art of words. Why should they? Masters of Hellas as well as of the west, their deeds are eloquent enough.

Alas for Korinthos, that ancient city now reduced to rubble! All over Italy you can see her gods and heroes in bronze and marble, and Moummios, the man who stole them, has left his name on each. This whole city is full of loot. If you were ever in Dion in Makedōnia, you'll remember Lysippos's great group of equestrian bronzes, Alexandros the Great among the twenty-four of his Companions who died at the battle of the Granikos. You won't find them if you go there now. They are here in Rhōmē, at the south end of the Field of Arēs, in a portico newly put up by another of the robbers; the temple of Zeus that it surrounds is made of marble taken from Hellenic quarries.

There's nothing new about this; for centuries, most of the temples in Rhōmē have been paid for out of the booty of conquest. What *is* new is the way they think about themselves. The man who defeated King Antiochos at Thermopylai, and drove him out of Hellas, used his spoils to build a temple to Piety; the man who captured Syrakousai in the war with Hannibal used his to build a temple to Honor and Virtue; one of the commanders in the earlier naval war against the Karkhēdonioi used his to build a temple to Public Trust. But where are those values now?

When the temple of Public Trust was built, more than a hundred years ago, the Rhōmaioi thought of themselves as equals. They divided up the land of the Sabinoi in equal lots of twenty *plethra* per man, and even the commander took no more. Later, when Hannibal had been ravaging Italy for twelve years, they did what they had done when the plague struck them: they sent for a foreign god to help them, and brought the Great Mother from Phrygia. Her temple is there on the Pallantion hill, next to Nikē and the founder-hero's shrine; she is a goddess of the common people, who make their contributions to her cult. We Hellenes might have thought of Rhōmē then as a *dēmokratia*. But when the Mother did what she was brought for, and drove Hannibal out, Rhōmē had no-one to fear, and her powerful men grew insolent.

Public land was encroached on to create great estates for the rich, and the *dēmos* could not claim its property back. Then my pupil and dear friend Grakkhos was elected as one of the *dēmos*'s magistrates (*tribounoi* in their language), and arranged for the passing of a law restricting holdings of public land to 2800 *plethra* per person, the rest to be confiscated and divided among the poor. Now they claim he was trying to set himself up as a *tyrannos*, because he restricted them to only 140 times the size of a citizen's farm plot!

The *dēmos*'s magistrates have always been considered sacrosanct: any attempt to offer violence to them is sacrilege. Yesterday Grakkhos was presiding over

the *dēmos*'s assembly on the Head-hill, in the sight of Zeus, and the *gerousia* (*senatus* in their language) was meeting nearby. Indeed, so arrogantly did these *eupatridai* believe in their own self-justification that they met in the temple of Public Trust. A mob of them came out, led by the chief priest, and beat Grakkhos to death. We all fled, but their slaves and hired men caught many of us, and now we await execution. At the hearing there will be no place for Hellenic eloquence. "Did you help Grakkhos?" "Yes." That will be enough.

It is not good for any *polis* when the few are overbearing in their victory and the many are sullen in their defeat. For the Rhōmaioi, this is truly the beginning of evils.

Evidence

Diophanes, tutor of Tiberius Gracchus: Cic. *Brut.* 104, Plut. *Ti. Gracch.* 8.5, 20.3 (executed).

Destruction of Corinth by L. Mummius (146 BCE): Strabo *Geog.* 8.6.23 (C381), Paus. 7.16.7–9. His inscriptions: *CIL* I² 626–32, Wallace-Hadrill 2008, 132–3.

Lysippus's bronzes: Arr. *Anab.* 1.16.4, Pliny. *HN* 34.64. Portico of Metellus Macedonicus: Vell. Pat. 1.11.3–5; Viscogliosi 1999. Metellus's Jupiter temple: Vitr. *De Arch.* 3.2.5, Plin. *HN* 36.40; Viscogliosi 1996.

Temple of Pietas: Val. Max. 2.5.1 (M. Acilius Glabrio, 191 BCE). Temple of Honos et Virtus: Val. Max. 1.1.8 (M. Claudius Marcellus, 208 BCE). Temple of Fides Publica: Cic. *Nat. D.* 2.61 (A. Atilius Caiatinus, 258 or 254 BCE).

Sabine land divided 7 *iugera* per man (about 4.3 acres): Val. Max. 4.3.5b, Columella, *Rust.* 1.Pref.14, Plin. *HN* 18.18 (275 or 274 BCE).

Magna Mater brought in 204 BCE: Livy 29.10.4–11.8, 14.5–14; Ov. *Fast.* 4.247–349. Temple: Livy 36.36.3–4 (191 BCE); Pensabene 1996. Common people: Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 2.19.4, Ov. *Fast.* 4.350–2.

Agrarian crisis of 133 BCE, 500 *iugera* limit: App. *B Civ.* 1.7–9. Murder of Ti. Gracchus: App. *B Civ.* 1.15–17, Val. Max. 3.2.17 (temple of Fides Publica). Hearings: Sall. *Jug.* 31.7.

Victory of the *nobilitas* over the *plebs*: Sall. *Jug.* 16.2, 42.4. Arrogance of the *nobilitas*: Sall. *Jug.* 5.1, 64.1, 85.19.

The Astrologer: Thrasyllus of Alexandria, 2 CE

You mustn't address him as king, though he has far greater power than Alexandros and all the Ptolemaioi put together. You must call him "Kaisar," the name of his adoptive father, the champion of the *dēmos*, whose murder he avenged in battle when he was just 21. My patron, his stepson, has explained to me why he uses the powers of the *dēmos*'s magistracy to legislate and to number the years of his rule: it's because he wants to be thought of not as a king, much less a *tyrannos*, but as the protector of the *dēmos* against the arrogant *eupatridai*.

So he doesn't have a palace. The house he lives in, on the Pallantion hill, has a grand formal entrance but is otherwise no more impressive than the others in the neighborhood – which also belong to him, or to his relations and friends. What matters is the site. His house is close to the temple of Nikē, now three centuries old (though he has of course restored it), and to the temple of the Great Mother, now two centuries old, and to the historic shrine of the founder-hero, where the thatched hut Rhōmylos is supposed to have lived in is regularly rebuilt every time a spark from a sacrifice burns it down. Above all, it is close to his great new temple of Apollo. Built of shining marble, with the bronze Sun-chariot on the roof, the temple is hung with trophies from the great sea-battle against Queen Kleopatra which lost us our freedom and gave Rhōmē power over all the world.

Walk down from the Pallantion hill into the old *agora*, and you'll see how he manages the *dēmos*. The new temple of his deified father, the Kaisar whom the *eupatridai* assassinated, looks out over a wide newly-paved area flanked by grand colonnades; an arch in honor of his triumphs links the Kaisar temple with the ancient temple of the Dioskouroi; the colonnade along the south side belongs to a huge *stoa basilikē* built by his father, that along the north side is a new portico named after his sons; at each end of the open area there are speakers' platforms decorated with ships' beaks (*rostra* in their language), the western one built by his father and named "Ioulia" after him, as is the Senate-house nearby. Ioulios is his family name, and you find it everywhere.

But the traditional magistracies continue, and that's why the name in bronze letters in the *agora* pavement is one you've never heard of – Naivios Sourdios, a citizen who happened to be elected to the office responsible for seeing to the work. He has taken care to respect the site where they say a warrior of the Sabinoi in the war against Rhōmylos got stuck in a marsh and had to abandon his horse and swim to safety. Another ancient item still preserved is the fig tree where the twin founders were suckled by the she-wolf; it was magically transported from the cave of Pan by a famous *oiōnoskopos* called Attos Navios, no doubt an ancestor of the magistrate himself. Yet another is the old bronze statue of Marsyas the satyr, companion of Dionysos whom they call Liber; he has shackles on his feet with a broken chain, a symbol of the freedom of the *dēmos*.

Go past the Ioulian Senate-house into the street called "Death of Argos" (they

have various improbable stories to account for it) and follow the crowds into the two magnificent new colonnaded *agorai* built by the Kaisares, father and son. The first, the father's, is dominated by a temple of Aphroditē “the Mother.” For a long time now the Rhōmaioi have claimed that when Poseidon in the *Iliad* said it was fated for Aineias “to be king over the Trōes and their sons’ sons in the time to come,” he meant themselves, descendants of the Trōes who followed Aineias in his wanderings to the west. In particular, the Ioulioi believe that Aineias’s son was called Iouulos, and that they are therefore descended from Aphroditē.

The second new *agora*, only just completed, will give you everything you need to know about the story of the Rhōmaioi from that day to this. In front of a really enormous temple of Arēs “the Avenger” is a great bronze of Kaisar himself in a four-horse chariot, while the colonnades at each side house about 70 portrait statues, with inscriptions of each man’s life and deeds beneath – his ancestors down from Aineias on one side, the great commanders down from Rhōmylos on the other. The two heroes are marked out by their position, each at the center of a semicircular *exedra*, looking down on the litigious citizens in their togas and the magistrates adjudicating lawsuits.

Aineias’s inscription says that “he was called Father Indiges and enrolled among the number of the gods,” that of Rhōmylos says that “he was received among the number of the gods and called Quirinos.” How long before they alter the inscription of the bronze chariot to say the same thing of Kaisar? He has just passed the ninth of the difficult years that we who are wise in star science call *klimaktēres*. I may not reveal everything I know, but I will say this. My patron is called Tiberios Klaudios Nerōn, and those names too will one day be among the stories told in Rhōmē.

Evidence

Thrasyllus: Suet. *Aug.* 98.4, *Tib.* 14.4, *Calig.* 19.3; Tac. *Ann.* 6.20.2.

Augustus’s use of *tribunicia potestas*: Tac. *Ann.* 1.2.1, 3.56.2. Greeks calling him king: Antipater of Thessalonica in *Anth. Pal.* 10.25.5, Pylades in Macrob. *Sat.* 2.7.19.

Augustus’s Palatine property: Suet. *Aug.* 72.1–2; Wiseman 2009, 527–35. Victoria temple restored: *CIL* 6.31060, with Wiseman 1981, 189–92. Apollo temple: Prop. 2.31.1–16; Gros 1993.

Temple of Divus Iulius: Cass. Dio 51.22.2–4; Gros 1996. Arch of Augustus: Cass. Dio 51.19.1, 54.8.3; Nedergaard 1993.

Basilica Iulia: Augustus *Res gestae* 20.3; Giuliani and Verduchi 1993.

Porticus Gai et Luci: Suet. *Aug.* 29.4; Palombi [1999](#).

Rostra Iulia: Cass. Dio 56.34.4. Curia Iulia: Suet. *Calig.* 60, Cass. Dio 44.5.2, 51.22.1.

L. Naevius Surdinus: *CIL* 6.37068 (paving), 1468 (Lacus Curtius); Giuliani and Verduchi [1987](#), 93–4, 105–16. Mettus Curtius in the marsh: Varro *Ling.* 5.149, Livy 1.12.8–10, Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 2.42.4–6, Plut. *Publ.* 18.4.

Fig-tree: Plin. *HN* 15.77, Conon 48.8, Tac. *Ann.* 13.58. Marsyas: Hor. *Sat.* 1.6.120, Sen. *Ben.* 6.32.1, Servius on Verg. *Aen.* 3.20 and 4.58; Coarelli [1985](#), 91–119. Tree and statue are both shown on the Trajanic reliefs.

Argiletum explanations: Varro, *Ling.* 5.157, Servius on Verg. *Aen.* 8.345.

Forum Iulium and Venus Genetrix temple: Cass. Dio 42.22.1–2, App. *B Civ.* 2.102.424; Morselli [1995](#), Gros [1995](#). Aeneas: Hom. *Il.* 20.307–8. Iulus: Livy 1.31.1–2, Verg. *Aen.* 1. 267–71.

Forum Augustum and Mars Ultor temple: Ov. *Fast.* 5.549–96, Suet. *Aug.* 29.1–2, Cass. Dio 55.10.2–5; Kockel [1995](#). Chariot: Augustus *Res gestae* 35.1. Colonnades and statues: Ov. *Fast.* 5.563–6, Suet. *Aug.* 31.5, *TPSulp.* 13, 19.

Inscriptions, known from copies at Pompeii: *Inscr. Ital.* 13.3.85 (Aeneas), 86 (Romulus).

Augustus on passing his “climacteric” 63rd year: quoted in Gell. *NA* 15.7.3.

Suggestions for Further Reading

For Roman myths in general, see Bremmer and Horsfall [1987](#), Wiseman [2004](#); on the Aeneas story, see Galinsky [1969](#), Gruen [1992](#), 6–51; on the foundation legend, see Wiseman [1995](#); on Augustan interpretations, see Fox [1996](#), Rea [2007](#).

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CHAPTER FOUR

Defining the City: The Boundaries of Rome

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Introduction

The act of defining requires a boundary of some sort. Indeed, the very word “define” derives from the Latin verb *finire*, meaning “to limit” or “mark out with boundaries.” Boundary establishment, use and regulation was a notable Roman preoccupation (MacCormack 1979; Campbell 2000; Campbell 2005; Talbert 2005; Desideri 2006), and it is no surprise to find the art being practiced enthusiastically at Rome itself (Giardina 2000; Patterson 2000; Guilhembet 2006; Quilici 2006; Goodman 2007, 42–6). This chapter will introduce Rome’s many different boundaries individually, describing the function of each one, the reasons for its establishment and the impact which it had on urban life. But it will also look for common themes which link them, and set them into the wider context of boundary function in human thought and society. In this spirit, I would like to begin with an account of boundary theory drawn from the disciplines of philosophy, sociology, and geography. The aim is to return to the specific case of Rome with a stronger understanding of what boundaries are, and what we might expect to see them doing in the city.

Work in cognitive science and linguistics has indicated that boundaries are essential to human survival and understanding. They simplify diversity by creating distinct categories, and thus allow us to make sense of and interact with what is in reality a very complex and diverse world (Lakoff and Johnson 1999, 17–20; Jones 2009, 178–9). The categories which boundaries create can of course be spatial: that is what we are dealing with primarily in this chapter. But we also use boundaries to define linguistic concepts (e.g. love, hate, food, furniture) and social groupings (e.g. men, women, teachers, Etruscans). Linguistic boundaries allow us to define terms such as “city” and “Rome,” social boundaries to define the urban community, and spatial boundaries to define the physical limits of the city. All three also interact with one another: for example, the spatial boundaries help to make what is inside them recognizable as an example of the linguistic concept, “city” (see further below), and may be used in attempts to calculate the size of the urban population (e.g. Morley 1996, 33–9; Storey 1997). Meanwhile, boundaries of

any kind reinforce the existence of the entities which they define. This applies equally to linguistic concepts and social groupings (Abbott 1995; Newman and Paasi 1998; Lamont and Molnár 2002), but Jones puts the case particularly clearly for spatial boundaries: “Once the boundary is reified, either as a line on a map or as a fence on the ground, the category it is meant to represent appears to come more fully into being” (Jones 2009, 185). In a very real sense, then, boundaries *make* a city, by transforming an area of otherwise insignificant space into a place with real human meaning (Tuan 1977).

The role played by boundaries in creating and defining meaning also makes them ripe for use as instruments of power. As Newman and Paasi (1998) point out, boundaries can be used to separate social groups “vertically” by means of social hierarchies, or “horizontally” through the use of political or territorial boundaries. Both types of boundaries emphasize the differences between social groups, and can be used to sustain one group’s dominance over another: for example by restricting access to particular privileges or places (Newman and Paasi 1998; Lamont and Molnár 2002). Yet most of us are aware that boundaries used for the sake of simplicity are at best an approximation of a more complex reality (Jones 2009). For this reason, boundaries are also open to challenge and renegotiation, especially when used to control resources or exercise power. Indeed, Oommen sees such challenges as an essential characteristic of human societies: “The rise and fall, construction and deconstruction of different types of boundaries... make up the very story of human civilisation and of contemporary social transformation” (Oommen 1995, 251). With this in mind, it is time to examine the boundaries of ancient Rome, and the challenges and changes which they too underwent.

Defending and Defining: The City Walls

Republican Rome boasted a walled circuit 11 kilometers long, which enclosed an area of 426 hectares including the famous seven hills and the Forum valley (Grimal 1959; Todd 1978, 11–20; Ross Holloway 1994, 91–101; Andreussi 1996). This was known in antiquity as the “Servian wall,” and attributed to Servius Tullius, the sixth king of Rome, traditionally dated 578–535 BCE. Archaeological investigation has now shown that the bulk of the work was actually carried out in the early fourth century BCE, but probably incorporated some sections of earlier defenses. By the Augustan period the city had vastly outgrown this circuit, and in the late third century CE this became problematic. The emperor Aurelian constructed a new wall, nearly 19 kilometers long and enclosing c. 1,400 hectares (Richmond 1930; Todd 1978, 21–45; Todd 1983; Pisani Sartorio 1996; Dey 2011). This was concentric with the old Republican circuit, enclosing new districts on every side of the city.

Work on Aurelian's wall probably began in 271 CE, and is linked by the ancient sources with fears arising from barbarian incursions into north Italy in 259–60 and 270 (Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 35.7; SHA *Aurel.* 21.9).

Both of these circuits were clearly constructed with real defensive needs in mind. Where the Republican wall crossed the plateau between the Quirinal and Esquiline hills, it was fronted by a wide ditch designed to keep siege engines at bay (Todd 1978, 13–14). The wall itself was solidly constructed from squared tuff blocks and backed with an earthen rampart (*agger*) for reinforcement. It saw action on numerous occasions between the fourth and first centuries BCE, and was regularly embellished or repaired to maintain its efficacy against attack (Andreussi 1996, 320–21). The Aurelian wall lacked the ditch and rampart of its Republican predecessor, but was equipped with closely spaced solid towers from which to fire at approaching attackers (Dey 2011, 17–31). Todd (1983) has argued that it was modeled on urban defenses on the eastern fringe of the empire, whose performance under siege conditions Aurelian had witnessed personally. Once built, this circuit, too, was strengthened and modified in the early fourth and early fifth centuries CE, including the addition of a defensive ditch and the doubling in height of the curtain wall (Richmond 1930, 251–62; Todd 1978, 46–68; Dey 2011, 32–47). It defended Rome during the Gothic wars of the sixth century, and continued to be repaired regularly in the early medieval period (Richmond 1930, 263–7; Coates-Stephens 1998, Dey 2011, 63–70).

The walls of Rome were thus subject to challenge in the very literal sense of direct attack. But this was not because the besiegers wished to redefine the line of the walls themselves. Rather, it was because the space which they enclosed was endowed with such phenomenal associations of power (Hope 2000). Control of the physical space of the city brought control of its political institutions, its citizen body and its empire. Thus attacks on the walls of Rome equated to attacks on the more abstract boundaries governing access to political power. It was these which the besiegers really hoped to redraw.

For all the defensive function of either circuit in its heyday, though, Rome went effectively undefended for at least three centuries during the high empire. Augustan authors report that the city had outgrown the Republican circuit, engulfing or breaching parts of it in the process (Livy 1.44; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 4.13.3–5; Strabo *Geog.* 5.3.7), and their observations are confirmed by archaeology (Andreussi 1996). Dionysius's discussion of this issue is particularly interesting, since it conveys not only a factual account of the circuit's condition, but also a degree of anxiety about it. It is not simply that he considers the city vulnerable to attack. Dionysius protests that it has become difficult to tell where city ends and country begins, and that a comparison of the walled areas of Rome and Athens would suggest little difference between them: something clearly at odds with his perception of their relative power. Indeed, it is no surprise that the state of Rome's walls

provoked anxiety. Walls were so synonymous with urban status in Roman thought that Latin authors could use the term *moenia* (“fortifications”) to mean an entire city (e.g. Cic. *Cat.* 2.1.1; Verg. *Aen.* 6.549; Vitruvius. *De Arch.* 1.4.1; Florus. 1.4.2). Meanwhile, the foundation legends presented Romulus’s establishment of the first walled circuit as a defining moment in the birth of Rome (Livy 1.7; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 1.87–88; Ovid. *Fast.* 4.807–62; Plut. *Rom.* 10–11). In other words, it is clear that the walls of Rome were indeed playing what we have seen is the most fundamental role of a boundary: creating the reality of the city. If the line of the walls was unclear, Rome’s urban status might be questioned.

As we shall see, lawyers did indeed recognize the Republican walled circuit as the literal defining limit of the city. It was also treated throughout the period of the high empire as the most significant point of entry into Rome (Guilhembet 2006, 82–4). Yet in spite of this, the very obsolescence of the walls carried a potential symbolic capital of its own. The emperor Augustus showed an interest in the Republican wall as a marker of the city limits, ordering the monumentalization of two of its gates (Andreussi 1996, 321). But he never sought to restore or extend the walled circuit itself. For him, the ancient, crumbling walls could foster a sense of connection with Rome’s past in much the same way as his claims to have restored the Republic or the celebration of the *ludi Saeculares*. At the same time, the fact that Rome had outgrown the old circuit demonstrated how much greater it had become in the present day, and afforded concrete proof of the *pax Augusta*. It was in this context that Ovid proclaimed: “for the Roman people, the space of the city and of the world is one” (*Fast.* 2.684). The power of Augustan Rome was so great that the city had become (literally) unlimited (Haselberger 2007, 230–37).

After Augustus, any later emperor who chose to re-establish working defenses at Rome ran the risk of suggesting that the city was less secure and her influence less extensive than during the reign of the first emperor. The construction of Aurelian’s wall must represent the point at which a shift in the public mood made the positive benefits of establishing a secure circuit outweigh the negative implications of admitting that one was needed. But even then, a more than purely defensive role for the Aurelian wall must be suspected. The length of the circuit would have made it impossible to defend all sides of it at once, while in some places the relationship between the wall and existing structures such as aqueducts or the *Castra Praetoria* created weak points in the defenses (Richmond 1930, 63–4 and 243). Aurelian’s wall can be seen as a demonstration of his ongoing concern for the city, and of his own imperial power, as much as a real defensive fixture (Dey 2011, 110–36).

Religion and politics: The *pomerium*

Rome also had a religious boundary, known as the *pomerium*. Ancient authors mention this boundary frequently, and sometimes discuss it directly (key passages include Varro *Ling.* 5.143; Livy 1.44; Tac. *Ann.* 12.23–24; Plut. *Rom.* 11; Gell. *NA* 13.14). Their accounts reveal that the *pomerium* bestowed a sacred status on the city, protecting it from external threats associated with military activity or death-pollution (Beard, North, and Price 1998, 177–81; Andreussi 1999; Patterson 2000; Simonelli 2001). They also agree that the line which it followed could be moved. But they contradict one another on matters such as the precise meaning of the word *pomerium*, its physical characteristics, its origins, the circumstances under which it could be extended, the identities of the generals or emperors who had done so, and where exactly it ran (Syme 1978; Antaya 1980; Boatwright 1984, 1986; Andreussi 1999; Simonelli 2001; Lyasse 2005). Much that we would like to know about the *pomerium* therefore remains obscure, and its course at any given time is difficult to reconstruct.

Several authors associate the *pomerium* with defensive walls, either etymologically (Varro *Ling.* 5.143; Livy 1.44) or through the story of Romulus, who was supposed to have established Rome's first *pomerium* as preparation for his walls (Ov. *Fast.* 4.807–62; Tac. *Ann.* 12.24; Plut. *Rom.* 11). The etymological derivations are spurious (Antaya 1980), and we will return later to the case of Romulus. But the belief in the association probably reflects a real relationship between the *pomerium* and the Republican wall: though the Aventine hill was apparently excluded (Sen. *De brevitate vitae* 13.8; Gell. *NA* 13.14). Later, inscribed stone *cippi* were set up to mark an extension to the *pomerium* performed by Claudius in 49 CE, another by Vespasian and Titus in 75, and a restoration by Hadrian in 121 (Andreussi 1999, 102–4). Although some of these *cippi* have been found in their original positions, too few survive to reconstruct the courses of these *pomeria* precisely (Labrousse 1937; Poe 1984; Andreussi 1999). Nevertheless, their overall distribution suggests that Claudius brought the Pincian, the Aventine, and the south-western Campus Martius into the pomerial circuit, while Vespasian and Titus incorporated the eastern edge of the Campus Martius.

Our sources are clearer about the meaning and impact of the *pomerium*. Much as the walls endowed Rome with urban status, the *pomerium* defined the city as sacred and divinely protected (Livy 5.52). It also marked out the appropriate spheres for particular activities. Generals took the military *auspices* and military *imperium* only as they passed beyond it (e.g. Cic. *Att.* 7.1.5; Cic. *Div.* 2.35.74–5; Caes. *BCiv.* 1.6), while meetings of the quasi-military *comitia centuriata* (Gell. *NA* 15.27.4–5) and with enemy ambassadors (e.g. Livy 30.21.12 and 33.24.5) took place outside it. The dead could also be buried or cremated only outside the *pomerium* (Twelve Tables X.1 = Crawford 1996 vol. II, 704–5). The interior was the proper place for taking the city

auspices (Varro *Ling.* 5.143; Gell. *NA* 13.14; Liou-Gille 1993, 103–5), while the *potestas* of the tribunes of the plebs expired either at the *pomerium* (Cass. Dio 51.19.6) or one mile beyond (Livy 3.20.6–7; see also Drogula 2007 on other magistrates). When the emperors came to hold military *imperium* and *tribunicia potestas* simultaneously, the spatial restrictions on these powers became obsolete (Cass. Dio 51.19.6 and 53.32.5; Boatwright 1986), but some emperors still chose to remain outside the *pomerium* before celebrating a triumph (Joseph. *BJ* 7.123). The rules on the burial of the dead, meanwhile, remained in place until late antiquity (Simonelli 2001, 144–6).

The restrictions on burial should have meant that all of Rome's inhabitants were affected by the *pomerium*. But remarkably few of the laws establishing or re-affirming this ban actually mention the *pomerium* directly, and in practice city-dwellers probably did not need an intimate knowledge of it in order to respect the law. While the *pomerium* followed much the same course as the city walls, the walls themselves would have indicated more clearly where burials were forbidden. Later, the known extensions of the *pomerium* only ever incorporated densely built-up areas such as the Campus Martius, where land would not generally have been available for burial anyway. The other restrictions imposed by the *pomerium* would matter to an augur or a politician, and if these people were in doubt about where the boundary ran they could look for the *cippi* set up by the emperors or consult the public archives (Tac. *Ann.* 12.24). But the *cippi* were spaced hundreds of feet apart and were not particularly large (Guilhembet 2006, 85). Once the *pomerium* had been separated from the city walls, it must have been difficult to discern within the urban landscape: and indeed it is clear that many ancient writers had little idea of its course.

The confusion is clearest in the Antonine writer Aulus Gellius, who addresses the relationship between the *pomerium* and the Aventine hill (Gell. *NA* 13.14; Boatwright 1984, 38). Gellius begins by asking why the Aventine lies outside the *pomerium*, using the present tense as though this were a current issue. But Claudius had brought the Aventine within the *pomerium* over a century earlier: as Gellius himself reports later in the same chapter. This contradiction is partly the result of Gellius's approach. His *Attic Nights* are presented as jottings made as he read, without the expectation of consistency (Holford-Strevens 2003, 27–47). But Gellius does not appear to be drawing on his personal experience of Rome at any point during this discussion. Rather, he names two written sources: a work *On Auspices* by the Republican augur, Messala, and the *Commentary* of an early grammarian. In other words a knowledge of the *pomerium* was a matter of literary curiosity rather than a practical outcome of living in Rome (Holford-Strevens 2003, 330–31). Indeed, Seneca sneers at expertise on the *pomerium*, characterizing those who know when it was last extended, or why the Aventine hill was excluded, as “more tiresome than learned” (Sen. *De brevitate vitae* 13.8). Though

doubtless intended primarily as a jibe against Claudius, whose extension of the *pomerium* was probably accompanied by an antiquarian discourse on the subject (Boatwright 1984, 39–40), Seneca clearly expects his readers to agree that such knowledge was useless and trivial.

In this context, the significance of moving the *pomerium* becomes clearer. The ceremony of an extension would have drawn attention to a boundary otherwise liable to slip out of the public consciousness. Extensions to the *pomerium* were also highly politicized, especially once they had become associated with extensions to the boundaries of the empire. Boatwright (1984, 1986) attributes this idea to Claudius, whose *cippi* state that he expanded the *pomerium* “with the boundaries of the Roman people having been increased.” Certainly, it does not appear in pre-Claudian texts: Livy (1.44) simply states that the *pomerium* was extended as the city grew. As an emperor appointed against the will of the senate, it was particularly important for Claudius to prove his military credentials, and the *pomerium* offered a way to bring his victories home to the Roman people. Most would never see Britain, but they could see its conquest re-enacted through the extension of the *pomerium*. Similarly, Vespasian, who achieved power in the dishonorable circumstances of a civil war, could use the *pomerium* to redirect attention towards his foreign conquests in Britain and Germany (Beard *et al.* 1998, 178). While Claudius had acted alone, Vespasian’s extension was carried out jointly with Titus, then also his colleague as both consul and censor, suggesting that the high-profile public ceremony was being used as one more component in a broader promotion campaign for Vespasian’s intended heir. Finally, in 121 CE Hadrian had no foreign conquests to display: in fact, he had ceded some of Trajan’s conquests in Parthia. But in this context, restoring the *pomerium* may have been even more valuable, since it indicated that the boundaries of the empire were secure nevertheless. In a similar vein, religious processions around the *pomerium* were used to reaffirm its protective power whenever the city was under threat (Beard *et al.* 1998, 178; Guilhembet 2006, 88–9).

The *pomerium*, then, was clearly subject to the renegotiations which we have already identified as behavior commonly associated with boundaries. Emperors changed its course, and – if Boatwright is correct about Claudius inventing the relationship between the *pomerium* and the limits of the empire – they also changed its meaning. As with attacks on the city walls, though, these changes had little to do with real concerns about the course of the boundary, and everything to do with what it represented. By moving or restoring the *pomerium*, emperors could symbolically redefine the empire as being larger or more secure than it had previously been. More importantly, by emphasizing their own role in achieving that outcome, they could also redefine themselves as more capable and desirable rulers.

We saw earlier that boundaries can be used to strengthen social identities, and Orlin (2008) has drawn attention to an example of this behavior with

reference to the *pomerium*. One way of strengthening “Roman” identity was to expel unwanted social groups from the city, and indeed such expulsions occurred on a fairly regular basis. In most cases, our sources simply state that particular groups were expelled from “Rome” or the “city” (e.g. Suet. *Gram. et rhet.* 1.2; Ath. 12.547a; Suet. *Tib.* 36; Cass. Dio 57.18.5). But Cassius Dio reports that shortly after the battle of Actium, Augustus forbade the celebration of Egyptian rites within the *pomerium*: a measure later extended for another mile by Agrippa (Cass. Dio 53.2.4 and 54.6). This contrasts sharply with legislation designed to ban particular religious practices outright. The classic case is the *senatus consultum de Bacchanalibus* (CIL I².581), which expresses its prohibitions against the worship of Bacchus in relation to people (e.g. men, women, citizens, allies) and behavior (e.g. having shrines, attending meetings, holding rites). By defining his restriction in terms of a spatial boundary, Augustus appeared more lenient, since worshippers could still celebrate Egyptian rites outside the *pomerium*, and also enter freely inside it so long as they left their religious practices behind. Thus he avoided attracting resentment from devotees of the Egyptian gods, yet also strengthened and reaffirmed his own position by purging Rome’s sacred center of the cults of a recent enemy. The example demonstrates how spatial and social boundaries can interact, with the *pomerium* serving to re-define the values associated with a “Roman” identity.

A Practical Perspective: Law, Taxation and Administration

There were also numerous legal, fiscal and administrative definitions of Rome, which either related to the boundaries discussed above, or generated new ones where those proved inadequate. We have seen that the walled circuits symbolically defined Rome as a city: indeed, the Republican walls were still used in legal definitions of the “*urbs*” in the third century CE (*Dig.* 50.16.2 and 50.16.87). Already by the Augustan period, though, a definition which treated Rome only as the area within the walls was an oversimplification, obscuring the more complex reality of the city (Le Gall 1991). The concept of the *continentia aedificia* was thus developed as an alternative. Literally the “adjoining buildings” this was a way of referring to the entire built-up agglomeration. The earliest appearance of the concept is in the *Tabula Heracleensis* from Lucania, which preserves what is probably Caesarian legislation relating to the city of Rome (lines 20 and 56; see Crawford 1996 vol. I, 355–91). This furnishes a clear example of the need for a better definition of the city than the walls could provide, since it concerns matters such as street maintenance and traffic restrictions. If the legislation had been formulated with reference to the *urbs* or even Roma, there was a

danger that it might be considered valid only within the city walls. Using the concept of the *continentia aedificia* instead allowed the legislators to clarify that it applied to *all* of the built-up urban agglomeration.

Likewise, many spheres of administrative or political control were defined in terms of distance from the city (Taylor 2000, 76–9; Guilhembet 2006, 82 and 105). The distance concerned could vary, extending from one mile, which marked the limit of validity of the Urban Praetor’s judgments (Gai. *Inst.* 4.104) up to a hundred miles for the powers of the Urban Prefect in late antiquity (*Dig.* 1.11.1). But the most common measure was one mile: a point also marked by religious sites on several of the roads out of Rome (Colonna 1991, 216–32). There was also some debate as to where that mile should be counted from: the walls or the edges of the *continentia aedificia* (Goodman 2007, 15–16). But the intention in either case was clearly to define spheres of jurisdiction in a way which ensured that they were understood to apply to the whole of Rome, and not just the walled *urbs*.

The fourteen regions created by Augustus may be seen in a similar light (Fraschetti 1999; Palombi 1999; Lott 2004; Wallace-Hadrill 2008, 276–90). These regions were internal subdivisions of the city, themselves divided again into smaller neighborhoods (*vici*), and created at least partly for administrative purposes. Suetonius and Dio indicate that each region was assigned annually to a magistrate charged with its care, while also serving as the basis for organizing the prevention of fire (Suet. *Aug.* 30; Cass. Dio 55.8.6–7 and 55.26.4–5). In this context, Augustus needed to ensure that all of Rome’s built-up districts were included within his regions, since those outside the walls were just as much in need of administrative oversight and vulnerable to fire as those within. As a result, many of the new regions extended well beyond the Republican wall (Palombi 1999), and one even lay across the Tiber (see further below). Yet there is no evidence that Augustus ever established any distinct outer boundary around the circumference of the fourteen regions as a whole (Palombi 1999; Guilhembet 2006, 109). Rather, they were probably held simply to end with the outer edges of the *continentia aedificia*, and to “grow” outwards as the city expanded. From a practical perspective, this made good administrative sense, pre-empting the possibility that new areas of urban growth would suffer administrative neglect. But alongside Augustus’s decision not to restore the Republican wall, it may also be another sign of his interest in presenting Rome as a city which was literally unlimited (Frézouls 1987; Haselberger 2007, 222–31).

The establishment of the fourteen regions also had the effect of creating internal boundaries between different parts of Rome. These were important mainly to administrators, including the magistrates appointed to each region, the prefects charged with preventing fire and the curators responsible for the city’s water supply (Robinson 1992, 8–11). Certainly, the fact that Frontinus, appointed to the latter office in 97 CE, systematically describes which of the

Augustan regions were supplied by each of the city's aqueducts suggests that he used them in his work (Frontin. *Aq.* 79–86). There is also some possibility that planning decisions might be shaped by the existence of the regionary boundaries, since the *Historia Augusta* claims that the emperor Severus Alexander set out to ensure that every region contained at least one public warehouse and one bathhouse (SHA *Alex. Sev.* 39.3–4). Indeed, the Augustan regions clearly remained a meaningful way of thinking about the city into at least the fourth century, when they served as the organizational framework for two accounts of Rome's private and public buildings known as the Regionary Catalogues (Arce 1999; Wallace-Hadrill 2008; 290–301). But their impact on day-to-day life is likely to have been small. There is no secure evidence that the regionary boundaries were physically marked within the urban fabric, making it likely that most city-dwellers were only vaguely aware of where they ran.

Finally, a series of *cippi* established by Marcus Aurelius and Commodus during their joint principate of 177–180 CE attest the existence of a customs boundary at Rome (*CIL* 6.1016a–c and 31227; Palmer 1980; Guilhembet 2006, 108–17). This is not securely documented in any other sources, but the practice clearly antedated the *cippi*, since their inscriptions state that they were set up to “mark the boundary for the one and only imposition of the tax on market goods according to piece and bulk in accordance with the old law.” On this basis, Palmer (1980) and Guilhembet (2006) have both suggested that it may lie behind a reference in Pliny the Elder to 37 gates (*portae*) in Flavian Rome (Plin. *HN* 3.66). This ambiguous passage does not clarify the function of these gates or their relationship with the older boundary of the Servian wall, but the Regionary Catalogues also record a figure of 37 gates in the Aurelian city wall (Guilhembet 2006, 115). Here, a relationship with the customs boundary of Marcus Aurelius and Commodus is moderately secure, at least for some parts of the circuit, since three of the four known *cippi* were found close to its course (Dey 2011, 81–2). Thus, Pliny's gates, Marcus Aurelius and Commodus's *cippi* and Aurelian's wall may all have marked customs collection points at different times. This does not mean that these points remained static: rather, the boundary was probably adjusted periodically in order to ensure that it enclosed the bulk of the urban agglomeration at any given time. Certainly, the *cippi* which we have suggest that in the second century, its course had become questionable, since they state that Marcus Aurelius and Commodus “ordered these stones to be set up on account of the disagreements arising between the tradesmen and the customs concessionaires.” In other words, this boundary, too, had been contested, and needed to be reaffirmed.

Man and nature: The Tiber

The course of the Tiber differs in two significant ways from the other boundaries discussed so far. It was determined by natural geography rather than human choice (Le Gall 1953, 19–35; Maischberger 2000a), and it did not form a complete circuit around the city. Indeed, as a transport route it clearly functioned more as a point of entry into Rome than as a boundary. Nevertheless, it could still be imbued with the secondary significance of a boundary by Rome's inhabitants. Historical accounts of a period when the far side of the Tiber had belonged to the Etruscans (Alföldi 1965, 288–96) must have preserved a sense that it was “different” from the rest of the city, even long after this had ceased to be the case. Occupation on the right bank was also regularly described as “*trans Tiberim*” (Cic. *Att.* 12.19.1), or “*Transtiberim*” (CIL 6.9847), indicating both a perception of difference and a hierarchy of status. If occupation on the right (western) bank was named for its location “across the Tiber” from that on the left (eastern) bank, then the latter was clearly more important.

When Augustus established his administrative regions, the status of Transtiberim as an integral part of Rome was recognized via its inclusion as the fourteenth district (Maischberger 2000b). But this action also reinforced the Tiber's role as a dividing line, since it served as an internal boundary between Transtiberim and the districts on the opposite bank. Similarly, the Aurelian wall included an extension across the river into the heart of Transtiberim. But most of the western course of the wall actually ran along the left bank of the Tiber (Dey 2011, 18 and 23–7), apparently recognizing and reifying a perceived difference between the left and right banks. Perhaps the ultimate testament to the Tiber's status as an urban boundary comes from Julius Caesar, who planned at one point to divert it as part of a move to extend the city (Cic. *Att.* 13.20.1, 13.33a and 13.35.1). This reveals an approach to the Tiber which equates it with other moveable boundaries such as the *pomerium* or the city walls. The sheer audacity of the plan, of course, would also have furnished a compelling demonstration of Caesar's power.

In the end, though, the Tiber could not be moved, and it remained a stark cognitive and practical boundary between the main part of the city on the left bank and Transtiberim on the right. In Rome itself, the construction of permanent bridges across the Tiber from early in the Republican era (Taylor 2002) meant that the logistical impact of the boundary was low. But the banks of the Tiber between Rome itself and Portus and Ostia at the mouth of the river are low and unstable, preventing the construction of bridges along this stretch (Le Gall 1953, 40–42; Taylor 2000, 133 and 247–8), and this in turn had a significant impact on the flow of goods transported from the mouth of the Tiber to Rome. Though the Tiber certainly was navigable by boat, its bends and currents posed problems for sails and oars respectively, so that in practice large quantities of goods came to Rome along the roads by cart, or up the river in barges (Le Gall 1953, 252–9; Keay 2012, 48–9; Aguilera Martín

2012). The people or animals who pulled these could not cross the river without a bridge, so that their cargoes were effectively confined to one or other bank of the Tiber throughout their journey up the river. In the Republican and early imperial periods, this would have meant primarily the left bank, where Ostia was located, allowing the goods to be unloaded in the ports and docks of the Emporium district on the same bank in Rome. But from the Claudian period onwards the harbors and canals built 3 kilometers east of the Tiber mouth at Portus generated new flows of traffic up the right bank. Indeed, Aguilera Martín (2012) has argued that from this point onwards, the right bank became busier than the left, leading to the gradual abandonment of the opposite towpath. In the city itself, these goods would have arrived first in Transtiberim, perhaps helping to explain its expansion from this period onwards (Tucci 2004, 202). Though the archaeology of the area is weak, it is clear that between the time of Augustus and the drafting of the Severan marble plan, it had changed from a district capable of accommodating a large basin for naval shows to an area of densely built urban occupation characterized by a high concentration of warehouses, workshops, storage depots and mills (Maischberger 2000b; Wilson 2001; Tucci 2004). It was probably in order to protect at least some of this important economic activity that Aurelian extended his wall across river.

The right bank of the Tiber also seems to have been home to a dense immigrant population (Maischberger 2000b, 81). This is particularly clear from Philo's account of his embassy to the emperor Gaius, in which he discusses Augustus's attitude to the Jewish population living in Transtiberim (Philo *Leg.* 155–58). But while Jews were sometimes expelled from Rome wholesale (Suet. *Tib.* 36 and *Claud.* 25.4; Cass. Dio 57.18.5), there is no evidence that the Tiber was used as an ethnic boundary. In fact, Philo claims that Augustus imposed no spatial or behavioral restrictions whatsoever on Rome's Jewish population. If immigrant groups clustered on the right bank of the Tiber, then, we must assume that this was the result of individual choice rather than legal compulsion. A possible explanation is that both voluntary immigrants and freed slaves (which is how Philo characterizes Rome's Jews) would be among the sectors of the population most likely to be involved in trade and industry, and thus to live in a district where these activities predominated.

The Power of the Past: Boundary Traditions

Julius Caesar's plans for re-routing the Tiber never came to fruition. But when boundaries *were* moved at Rome, the old markers seem generally to have been left in place. The Republican city wall was periodically breached or engulfed, as we have heard, but it was never systematically demolished.

Similarly, some of Claudius and Vespasian's pomerial *cippi* were found in their original positions despite later changes or restorations (Andreussi 1999, 102–4), presumably adding to the confusion about where the currently applicable course actually ran. This suggests that even obsolete boundaries were considered to have some value in Rome, which is in keeping with the general Roman reverence for tradition. Indeed, Romans of the late Republic and early empire venerated the routes of two boundaries which they believed dated back to the time of the kings. One encircled the Palatine hill, and the other marked the supposed limits of the *ager Romanus antiquus*: the original territory of Rome before the beginnings of her imperial expansion.

The Palatine circuit was believed to mark the line of the walls and *pomerium* established by Romulus at the foundation of Rome (Terrenato 1996). It is described by Tacitus (*Ann.* 12.24), and may also have been associated with the routes followed by the triumphal procession and the races of the Lupercalia (Citarella 1980; Quilici 2006, 322). In 1988, Andrea Carandini discovered a wall at the northern foot of the Palatine with a clear area on either side of it, which had been maintained and restored from the second half of the eighth century BCE to the end of the sixth (Carandini *et al.* 1992). For Carandini, this represented proof of the existence of Romulus and his circuit: but not all agree. Few besides Carandini consider Romulus to have been a historical figure (e.g. Raaflaub 2006), while the wall is thinner and lower down the slope than contemporary Latin or Etruscan fortifications (Terrenato 1996, 317), casting doubts over any defensive function. In any case, it was buried at the end of the sixth century in a landscaping program undertaken to prepare this area for building. The wall had thus been invisible for at least two centuries before the beginnings of written history in Rome, making it very unlikely that any real memory of it has been preserved (Wiseman 2008, 1–23).

The limits of the *ager Romanus antiquus* were ritually commemorated from at least the second century BCE onwards, and marked by shrines, groves or statues at the fifth or sixth milestones on the roads around Rome (Strabo *Geog.* 5.3.2; Alföldi 1965, 296–304; Scheid 1987). The early settlement at Rome must certainly have controlled a surrounding territory (Fulminante 2006), but whether these ceremonies marked its limits with any accuracy is open to question. The circuit which they define extended over the Tiber onto land which should have been under Etruscan control before the early fourth century BCE, while, as Smith has pointed out, the ritualization of particular points on the roads out of Rome need not equate to the conceptualization of a continuous boundary between them (Smith 2008). The likelihood is that, in common with so many other traditions about the archaic period, both the Palatine circuit and the limits of the *ager Romanus antiquus* were invented by Romans of later generations. But this does not make their celebration any less important. Whether they preserved anything of the reality of the archaic

period or not, these ostensibly obsolete boundaries served a very useful purpose in the late Republic and early empire. Their connection with Rome's origins helped to define the limits of the city in time as well as space. And, like the Republican walls, they were "proof" of the venerable antiquity of the city, and of how far the Romans had come since their humble origins.

Conclusion

Depending on exactly how they are counted, there were around ten different active or actively commemorated boundaries at Rome by the time Aurelian built his defensive wall: far more if the many legal and administrative definitions based on measures of distance are all counted separately. Collectively, they functioned very much as boundary-theories drawn from other disciplines suggest we should expect. It was the walls, above all, which made Rome, symbolically defining the space which they encircled as truly urban. But the expansion of the built-up agglomeration beyond the walls made their use in legal and administrative definitions a gross over-simplification of a far more complex reality. New ways of defining Rome therefore had to be formulated for practical purposes. Once the city had expanded across the Tiber, the river acted as a *de facto* dividing line, with practical consequences for the development of Transiberim. But Rome's inhabitants also seem to have embraced this division within the urban landscape, reifying it as a meaningful human boundary through the establishment of Augustus's regions and Aurelian's wall. Physical shifts in several of the boundaries, especially the *pomerium*, either occurred or were planned, and this was usually connected with attempts to redefine the state of the empire and the power of its leaders. But at the same time, the markers of old boundary lines tended to be conserved, and archaic boundaries may even have been invented in the drive to demonstrate the city's antiquity and its rise from humble origins. Finally, the *pomerium* was used on at least one occasion to strengthen and redefine 'Roman' identity via a purification of the sacred space which it enclosed.

There is little sign that anyone was troubled by the sheer number of these boundaries, or the different definitions of Rome which they offered. The *Historia Augusta* states that after building his new wall, Aurelian enlarged the *pomerium* (SHA *Aurel.* 21.9–11), which might suggest a desire to combine the two boundaries into one. But the problematic character of the *Historia Augusta* as a source means this claim has not been universally accepted. Syme (1978) argued that it simply reflects the author's awareness of earlier literary connections between *pomerium* and walls, and a desire to portray Aurelian as a "good" emperor. Meanwhile, although burials in many of the cemetery areas within Aurelian's wall tailed off after its construction, they did not cease

entirely (Stroszeck 2001; Dey 2011, 209–11). A more convincing case has been made for a relationship between Aurelian's wall and the customs boundary (Palmer 1980), but Dey (2011, 81–3) believes that even this has been overstated. In any case, it still leaves a slew of other ways of defining the city which no-one seemed concerned to rationalize (Guilhembet 2006, 112–17). The eagerness to establish boundaries at Rome certainly reflects a deep-seated interest in defining the city. But Rome was complex both physically and socially, and the best method of defining it clearly varied enormously depending on who was doing so and for what purpose. To have adhered to a single, one-size-fits-all boundary in all circumstances would have been (literally) extremely limiting.

Finally, there was of course a world beyond the boundaries: and one which was never so starkly separated from the city as the emphasis on urban demarcation might suggest. For all the defensive and symbolic value of a well-defined walled circuit, no ancient city could really afford to impose serious social or economic barriers between itself and the rural territory which surrounded it, and with which it was intimately interdependent. Even after Rome had outgrown the staple food capacities of its immediate hinterland, the land around the city remained an important productive zone, supplying it with both agricultural goods and building materials (Morley 1996, 83–107; Delaine 2000; Lafon 2001, 204–5; De Sena 2005; Goodman 2007, 54–5). For the wealthy elite of the late Republic and early principate, however, these functions were eclipsed by the ability of the *suburbium* to provide both an escape from the hubbub of the city and an extension of their urban lifestyles into the lavish surroundings of their suburban villas (Champlin 1982; Purcell 1987; Goodman 2007, 20–25 and 49–54; Adams 2008). Literary references show that properties some 25 miles beyond the city could be considered suburban, but this zone had no distinct outer boundary of its own: indeed, *suburbanitas* could be defined as much by attitude and behavior as by space (Champlin 1982). It was only as the *suburbium* gradually gave way to true countryside that the immediate influence of the city could be said to have been left behind: though not, of course, the wider sway of a state whose authority extended to the ends of the world.

Guide to Further Reading

Few English-language publications consider the boundaries of Rome holistically. Patterson (2000) comes closest, focusing on activities excluded by the different boundaries. In French, Frézouls (1987) and Guilhembet (2006) address the impact of boundaries on Rome's development and identity. In Italian, Giardina (2000) offers an overview and Quilici (2006) traces the changing significance of Roman boundaries. MacCormack (1979), Campbell

(2005), Talbert (2005) and Desideri (2006) treat boundary usage in Roman culture generally, while I found Jones (2009) the most useful point of entry into modern boundary theory.

The first port of call for up-to-date accounts of individual boundaries should be the *Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae* (LTUR). Beyond this, Richmond (1930) and Todd (1978) remain the standard accounts of the walls of Rome, now supplemented by Dey (2011) on Aurelian's. Palmer (1980) offers the fullest treatment of the customs boundary, and Scheid (1987) of the sanctuaries associated with the *ager Romanus antiquus*, while the Augustan regions have been fruitfully re-examined by Lott (2004) and Haselberger (2007). Taylor (2000) does not specifically treat the Tiber as an urban boundary, but has much of value to say on the relationship between the two banks.

Beard *et al.* (1998) provide a sensible introductory account of the *pomerium*. Liou-Gille (1993) and Simonelli (2001) offer detailed treatments, but tend to treat contradictions in the sources as a puzzle which can be solved via careful analysis: in my view, a flawed approach. More helpful are publications which tackle individual passages on the *pomerium* (e.g. Syme (1978); Boatwright (1984)), or focus on particular aspects of its use and impact (e.g. Lyasse (2005); Drogula (2007); Orlin (2008)). Meanwhile, the *suburbium* now has its own standard reference work, the *Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae: Suburbium*, and has been the subject of recent conferences published as Pergola *et al.* (2003), Santillo Frizell and Klynne (2005) and Volpe and Jolivet (2009).

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CHAPTER FIVE

The Development of the City: An Archaeological Perspective

i) From its Origins to the Second Century BCE

Amanda Claridge

The latest archaeological discoveries have confirmed what was long suspected, that the site on which Rome developed (see Map 1) has been occupied continuously since the Late Bronze Age (c. 1300–1200 BCE), probably since the Middle Bronze Age (c. 1500–1300 BCE). The first settlers chose the bottom of the Forum valley and the top of the adjacent Capitoline hill, a particular combination of low and high ground that was destined to stay at the heart of the city throughout its Roman period and to represent a typical pattern of settlement as it expanded to other valleys and hills and grew into the largest city in the ancient world, a process accompanied by ever more ambitious experiments in land- and water-management and the development of a built environment of increasing diversity and scale. It is a story conventionally pursued since the Renaissance within the historical and topographical frameworks provided by the ancient written sources, tailoring discussion of the archaeology and the natural landscape to fit. This chapter attempts to break out of that mold, not ignoring the textual evidence – which would be perverse – but allowing the archaeology and what we now know of the natural landscape to take the lead, rather than the other way around. No such approach to the evidence has been tried before, so be warned, it is not a companion to an existing body of scholarship; rather, it attempts to weave a new narrative out of many different and previously unconnected threads.

Lie of the Land

The first thing to note when trying to understand the physical site and its challenges is that most of Rome's hills are not real hills. Rather they are the edge of the plain of Latium which the Tiber and a series of tributary streams have eroded into a series of flat-topped promontories. Geologically they belong to the plain, composed of similar beds of volcanic ash which had solidified into various types of rock (tuff) and volcanic sands (pozzolana), deposited by the volcanoes of the Alban Hills to the south-east and the Monti

Sabatinini to the north-west. They only constitute hills when viewed from below, that is, from the valleys which define them or the plains beside the river; on top they merge with the level of the plain of Latium, from which direction they are readily accessible and do not appear as hills at all. The Capitoline, Palatine and Aventine, nearer the middle of the river valley, are more hill-like, standing clear on all sides, but in each case the valley on the side away from the river was not as deep and was divided in the middle by a saddle of land which connected the hill to the neighboring hill at a relatively high level. The saddle linking the Palatine and the Oppian hills, for instance, can still be seen (marked by the Arch of Titus), with the valley of the Sacra Via leading up to it from the Forum valley on one side and another valley descending from it to the valley of the Colosseum on the other. A similar saddle probably linked the Aventine and Smaller Aventine, while one in the middle of the valley between the Capitoline and Quirinal, where the Imperial Forums were laid out, is believed to have existed, but been destroyed in order to level the ground for Trajan's Forum.

There was an original difference in height of at least 40 meters (the equivalent of a 12-storey building) between the hills and plains on the east (left) bank of the Tiber, where the bulk of the city was to be located, and an equally significant discrepancy in the supply of fresh water, which was plentiful in the valleys and on the plains, obtainable from the river or, fresher still, from perennial springs that erupted at multiple points close to low ground level from the local aquifer, the natural reservoir, which is located in gravel beds underlying the hills. On the hilltops, however, the only source was rainwater, abundant for much of the year but subject to long summer droughts. The soils in the valleys and out on the river plain were deep and fertile, a mixture of sandy clays and clayey sands, which were well watered by the springs and intermittently inundated and replenished by the Tiber in the winter, but usually dry; their natural vegetation was grasses and reeds, well suited to the cultivation of a wide range of cereals. On the hilltops, in contrast, the soil cover was generally much thinner, the natural vegetation woodland (the mediterranean *macchia* of laurel, various species of oak, beech, birch, and hardy shrubs), with occasional pockets of deeper soil and high-level plains that could become as waterlogged by rainwater as the plains beside the river. Most hilltops had several separate heights, defined by smaller valleys and depressions which marked the upper plateaux, and also natural terraces at varying lower levels around their margins, corresponding to the harder strata which composed their bedrock.

Every valley, hillside and hilltop was not only a different shape and size; their fan-like arrangement meant they were each exposed to wind, sun, and rain to differing degrees, each with its own advantages and disadvantages for human settlement. All the variations are impossible to go into here, not only because they are too many, but because we still know too little about them. The urban

build-up, both during and after the Roman period, was far greater in some parts of the city than in others. On the plains the medieval and early modern city has buried the last Roman street level (c. 600 CE) 6–8 meters below the present street level, in the valleys the depths are even deeper (12–17 meters). Most of the major ancient hills, which were only sparsely populated between the end of the Roman period and the late nineteenth century, are still detectable in broad outline, and the build-up on their tops has been much less, though it can be difficult to tell how much of the outline is artificial; many minor ancient hills were eliminated in antiquity, and others created (such as Monte Testaccio, composed of broken amphorae); the medieval and early modern city created more. The original depths of the valleys, their lower profiles and the profiles of the plains beside the Tiber, are largely unknown. A few have acquired more precise definition, as a result of campaigns of geological coring since the 1980s pioneered by Albert J. Ammerman, but a great deal more work is needed before we will be able to judge how much is missing, especially on the low ground, which is probably seriously under-represented in the current archaeological record.

Some fifty ancient buildings of various kinds, the “Monuments of Rome,” survive above ground, mainly on the plains and in the valleys, in varying states of decay, having been put to many post-Roman uses (Table 5.1). They enable us to key the ancient into the modern cityscape, but it is exceedingly difficult to connect any of them together in their own time and space. For the rest, most archaeological discoveries have been, and continue to be made entirely by chance during building operations and either destroyed or reburied. Only the Palatine hill, the Roman Forum and the valley of the Sacra Via, which were cleared of most of their medieval and later overburden in the 1880s and consciously preserved as cultural heritage sites, are available for excavation over wide areas, and to re-excavation of the same spot, a luxury rarely granted elsewhere in the city. The valley of the Imperial Forums and two other chance discoveries (the “Area Sacra” at Largo Argentina on the plain of the Campus Martius and S. Omobono on the plain of the Forum Boarium) were added to the protected open-area sites in the 1930s, but they are exceptional.

Table 5.1 The standing monuments of ancient Rome.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Monument</i>	<i>zone</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>material</i>	<i>post-Roman use</i>
509 BCE	Platform, Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus	Capitoline	hill	tuff, earth	palazzo foundation
250–50 BCE	Temple A, Largo Argentina	Campus Martius	plain	tuff, travertine	church of S.Nicola

c.100 BCE	Temple B Largo Argentina	Campus Martius	plain	tuff	multiple
c.100 BCE	Temple of Portunus (“Fortuna Virilis”)	Forum Boarium	plain	tuff, travertine	church of S. Maria
c.100 BCE	Round Temple of Hercules (“Vesta”)	Forum Boarium	plain	marble	church of S. Stefano/S. Maria
c.100 BCE	Navalia (“Porticus Aemilia”), horrea	Emporium	plain	tuff, concrete	ruin, occupied occasionally
78 BCE	Substructure “Tabularium”	Capitoline	hill	tuff, travertine, concrete	palazzo foundation
28 BCE	Mausoleum of Augustus	Campus Martius	plain	tuff, earth, concrete	garden, concert hall, cinema
20 BCE	Temple of Apollo Medicus Sosianus	Circus Flaminius	plain	marble	partly re-erected on site 1930s
18–12 BCE	*Pyramid of Cestius	Emporium	plain	marble	Aurelian city wall
13 or 11 BCE	Theatre of Marcellus	Circus Flaminius	plain	travertine, tuff, concrete	palatial fortress
9 BCE	Altar of Augustan Peace	Campus Martius	plain	marble	reconstructed off site 1930s
2 BCE	Forum of Augustus, temple and precinct	Imperial Forums	valley	marble, peperino tuff	church/monastery
6 CE	Temple of Castor (rebuild)	Forum Romanum	valley	marble	left as ruin
55 BCE–30s ce	Theatre of Pompey and Tiberius	Campus Martius	plain	concrete, tuff, marble	multiple
10 CE	Gate,	Caelian	hill	travertine	continued in

	Republican wall, “Arch of Dolabella”				use
c. 10 CE	Gate, Republican wall, “Arch of Gallienus”	Esquiline	hill	travertine	continued in use
17 CE	Temples of Janus, Spes, Juno Sospita	Forum Boarium	plain	travertine, tuff	church S. Nicola
47 CE	*arch of Aqua Virgo (v.del Nazareno)	Campus Martius	plain	travertine	continued in use
52 CE	*Arches of Aqua Claudia (Pta Maggiore)	outer Esquiline	hill	travertine, concrete	Aurelianic city gate
54–70s CE	Platform of Temple of Divus Claudius	Caelian	hill	travertine, concrete	monastery garden
64–9 CE	Arcades of the Aqua Claudia	Caelian	hill	concrete, brick	ruin
80 CE	Amphitheatre of Flavian	Colosseum	valley	travertine, concrete, brick	fortress
81 CE	*Arch of Titus	Palatine	ridge	marble	gate in medieval fortification
81 CE	Temple of Deified Vespasian and Titus	Forum Romanum	valley	marble	left as ruin
96 CE	Forum of Nerva, precinct wall	Argiletum	valley	marble	“Le Colonnacce”
102 CE	Platform and Baths of Trajan	Oppian	hill	brick, concrete, marble	quarried
108 CE	“Markets of	Quirinal	hillside	concrete,	multiple

	Trajan”			brick, travertine	
113 CE	*Column of Trajan	Imperial Forums	valley	marble	burial ground, church bell-tower
126 CE	*Pantheon (rebuild)	Campus Martius	plain	marble, brick, concrete	church of S. Maria
139 CE	Mausoleum of Hadrian	Vatican	plain	marble, brick, concrete	fortress
145 CE	Temple of Deified Hadrian	Campus Martius	plain	marble	Borsa/ Chamber of Commerce
140–50 CE	*Temple of Deified Faustina and Ant.Pius	Forum Romanum	valley	tuff, marble	church of S. Lorenzo
180s CE	Column of Marcus Aurelius	Campus Martius	plain	marble	none
203 CE	*Porticus Octaviae (rebuild)	Circus Flaminius	plain	marble	church porch
203 CE	*Arch of Septimius Severus	Forum Romanum	valley	marble	church bell-tower, fortress
204 CE	*Arch of the Argentarii	Forum Boarium	plain	marble	gate
216–220s CE	Platform and Baths of Caracalla	via Appia	valley	concrete, brick, marble	sports ground, opera house
218–22 CE	Amphitheatre of Castrense	Esquilin	hill	concrete, brick	Aurelian city wall
226 CE	Nymphaeum of Alexander Severus	Esquiline	hill	concrete, brick, marble	“Trophies of Marius”
227 CE	Baths of Alexander Severus, ex-Nero	Campus Martius	plain	concrete, brick, marble	multiple
271–5 CE	Aurelian	Circuit of	hill and	concrete,	continued in

	Walls, Appian, Ostian and other gates	built-up area of city	plain	brick, some gates faced in marble	use
300 CE	Senate House / Curia Julia	Forum Romanum	valley	concrete, brick, marble	church, S. Urbano
305–6 CE	Platform and Baths of Diocletian	Viminal	hill	concrete, brick, marble	church S. Maria degli Angeli
306–15 CE	Basilica of Maxentius/Constantine	Sacra Via	valley	concrete, brick, marble	“Temple of Peace”
310 CE	“Temple of Divus Romulus”	Sacra Via	valley	concrete, brick, marble	part of SS. Cosmas and Damian
312 CE	*Arch of Constantine	Colosseum	valley	marble	gate in medieval fortification
330s CE	Arch of Deified Constantine (“Janus”)	Forum Boarium	plain	marble	fortress, market
360s CE	Temple of Saturn (rebuild)	Forum Romanum	valley	marble	ruin
300s/608 CE	*Column of Phocas	Forum Romanum	valley	marble	none

Note

* All or part of dedicatory inscription preserved.

The Bronze Age–Early Iron Age City

The Capitoline Hill, the smallest of Rome’s hills (c. 450 meters long by 200 meters wide), had two summits, one at each end, rising 44–46 meters above sea-level, with a flat depression (part of an old Tiber bed) between them, c. 36 meters above sea-level. Neither summit rose to the level of the Quirinal, Viminal and Esquiline hills to the east (48–56 meters above sea-level) and both lay far below the Janiculum to the west (80 meters above sea-level), but they commanded good views up and down the river valley and had near-vertical cliffs on the outside, making the hill a natural fortress in case of need, though water will have had to be brought up from the river or one of the

perennial springs at the foot of the hill. A part of the summit at the river end, on the slope facing the depression, was excavated in 1998 under the “Giardino Romano” of the Capitoline Museums, and proved to have been artificially levelled into terraces in the Late Bronze Age, presumably for cultivation, with some burials and further activity in the Final Bronze Age (Latial I, 1150–950 BCE), which may have included the northern summit as well (Lugli and Rosa 2001). This was followed, with no perceptible interruption, by thicker levels of occupation material and more burials on both heights, and traces of huts in the depression, in the Early Iron Age (Latial IIA/B and III, 950–700 BCE).

Down in the shelter of the Forum valley at the foot of the Capitoline’s northern summit, an excavation in 2005–8 under the southern end of the Forum of Caesar, found the rock-cut wheel-ruts of a street associated with undisturbed occupation material cut by high-status burials of the Final Bronze Age, and followed by huts, industrial activity (metalworking) and burials of the Early Iron Age, intensifying in the seventh century (Delfino 2014). The site occupied a broad shoulder of higher ground which runs along the Capitoline side of the Forum valley at about 13.50 meters above sea-level, and was close to a perennial spring of fresh water located at the same level (now marked by the subterranean *carcer Tullianum*, or “Mamertine Prison”). The spring was one of several in the Forum valley, forming natural foci for the early settlers, who had probably been attracted to the valley by its agricultural potential, wateriness and proximity to the river. Bronze Age peoples often preferred lake, marshy or riverside sites, building their villages over the water on piles. The Forum valley was almost a kilometer long, 250 meters wide at its mouth, between the Capitoline and Palatine hills, widening to about 400 meters further inland, where a valley joined it from either side, and ending at the feet of the Quirinal, Viminal and Cispian hills. A stream ran down its center, which collected the seasonal rainwater draining into the valley from the hills and also the overflow from the perennial springs, carrying both to the Tiber. The ground level out in the middle of the valley, about 7 meters below that at the shoulder, was registered in a sounding undertaken by Giacomo Boni under the Roman Forum in 1903–4 (reopened and published by Gjerstad 1953). In the natural soil, at 6.35 meters above sea-level, were three inhumation burials (a man, woman and baby), whose skeletons have recently yielded radiocarbon dates between 1250 and 930 BCE (Fulminante 2014, 94), i.e. Final Bronze Age or very Early Iron Age (Latial I–IIA). About a meter above them (7.25 meters above sea-level) lay part of a pisé hut floor, dating from the eighth century BCE or earlier, with large timber posts projecting through it (Gjerstad 1953, I, figs 21, 23), perhaps the remnants of piles which raised the hut off the ground, clear of the normal Tiber flood level. Over the hut floor, another meter higher in the ground (at 8.60 meters above sea-level), was another man-made surface, composed of tightly packed pebbles, laid on solid, similarly artificial, landfill, datable to the eighth or seventh century (750–620 BCE; the chronology of the assemblage of pottery from the fill is

currently disputed).

On the Palatine side of the Forum valley, in a series of soundings in the 1980s in the vicinity of another major freshwater spring (*fons Juturnae*), bedrock and occupation levels dating from the eighth–seventh century BCE, including post-holes and traces of huts, were registered at 11.20 meters above sea-level (Steinby 2012.1, 26). The level represents a shoulder of higher ground which continues into the mouth of the valley of the Sacra Via (the shallower valley separating the Palatine and Oppian hills), where in 1902, some 100 meters away to the north-east (beside the Temple of Antoninus Pius and Faustina), Boni found traces of huts of the tenth–ninth century replaced by a sizeable cemetery of the eighth century BCE (containing both inhumations, in log coffins, and cremations, in stone cists), which lasted into the early sixth century. Small pockets of Final Bronze Age and early Iron Age occupation material have been found, apparently in situ, at the same level, in the area between the Regia and the Temple of Vesta.

Other scattered finds, mainly burials, indicate that by the eighth–seventh century BCE settlement had spread to the whole inner end of the Forum valley, and also rose at least half-way up the valley of the Sacra Via, where excavations have identified man-made terracing on the Palatine side in the tenth–ninth century and a ditch in the valley bottom dateable to the eighth century (Carandini and Carafa 1995). The ditch is interpreted by the excavators as defensive but more probably was intended only to discipline the stream(s) which coursed down the valley. Neither the date nor the original route of the Sacra Via is certain; the name itself could reflect considerable antiquity, “Via” being a term used in later times only for main roads leading out of the city, not streets within it. Its lower end was straight, and clearly predated the Regia, whose earliest phases (seventh century BCE) were aligned with it. From there (at least as preserved in the form of a street paved in basalt, pre-dating the fire of 64 CE, excavated by Boni at the end of the nineteenth century), it took a winding course up to the saddle of high ground (c. 28.60 meters above sea-level) and disappears beneath the platform of Hadrian’s Temple of Venus and Rome, but has been traced under that, turning in the direction of the Oppian hill. There its destination, according to Varro (*Ling.* 5.47) was a grove and shrine of the goddess Strenia, in a locality known as the Carinae (“Keels”), from which a procession at New Year led back down the Sacra Via to the Regia and thence to the *Arx* (i.e. the Capitoline).

At the river end of the Forum valley, on the plain of the Forum Boarium, where the natural ground level was even lower (c. 5–6 meters above sea-level, just above the normal level of the river when full), a significant quantity of Middle–Late Bronze Age pottery was found in excavations in 1959–64 at S. Omobono (Peroni 1962). The site is currently under re-examination (Terrenato *et al.* 2012), but it seems the pottery had been redeposited as part of

the earthen fill of an artificial platform on which two temples were constructed (at 10.50 meters above sea-level) in the fourth century BCE, so was not in situ, but the earth presumably came from somewhere nearby. It has been thought to derive from the Capitoline hill, brought down from the top by hillwash or landslide, but that may have to be reconsidered in the light of the evidence from the Forum of Caesar (discussed above). The area contained a natural harbor, formed by an inlet from the Tiber which cut into the plain as far as the *Velabrum*, a spur of higher ground that ran across the mouth of the valley from the foot of the Palatine almost to the Capitoline, affording a natural landing place. (The harbor was eventually filled in and built over at the end of the first century CE, having been replaced by much larger river ports up- and downstream, but the *Velabrum* is still a perceptible feature of the landscape today.) A temple had already been built on the S. Omobono site in the early sixth century BCE (c. 580), founded close to natural soil (which bore signs of previous occupation, undated, perhaps of the later seventh century BCE or earlier) and was rebuilt around 535 BCE, increasing the size of its podium and its height (from 1.7 to 3.30 meters), the latter increase perhaps calculated to afford extra protection from Tiber floods. The river port was a logical point of departure for the Nova Via (New Road), a counterpart to the Sacra Via. Its lower section started from the top of the *Velabrum*, ascending the lower slopes of the Palatine hill on a diagonal to the northern corner and then along the upper north-eastern slope (its course could be reflected in the “via tecta” a winding street incorporated into the substructures of the Imperial palace). Where it originally ended is not known; it may have continued up to the Palatine summit (see below), or ran further along the hillside to the saddle between the Palatine and Oppian, where it would meet the Sacra Via, leading out of the city.

Neither the Palatine nor any of the other hills has as yet produced evidence of occupation quite as early as that on the Capitoline, or as substantial. Shards of Middle, Late and Final Bronze Age and very early Iron Age pottery have been found on most hills, but all in secondary deposition, mixed with later pottery, not in primary contexts, such as burials, votive deposits, or in association with evidence for huts, which do not appear before the Early Iron Age (Latial Period IIA–III), i.e. ninth–eighth centuries BCE. Most of these are isolated finds, difficult to quantify. The only evidence for a nucleated settlement comes in the form of a small cluster of hut floors, excavated in 1948 at the far western corner of the Palatine hill, cut into the bedrock of a gently sloping terrace (at 34–36 meters above sea-level), overlooking the *Velabrum* and the harbor in the mouth of the Forum valley, and probably directly above a natural spring at the foot of the hill, later enshrined in the *Lupercal* (Dion. Hal. 1.72.8). The village (if that is what it was) was founded in the early eighth century and lasted until the later seventh century BCE (Latial III, IVA–B), when it was replaced by more substantial buildings of uncertain function, on footings of dressed tuff stone, at least one of which, by the end of the sixth

century, was a small temple. The terrace extends at about the same level from the corner along the adjacent sides of the hill.

The original summit of the Palatine proper, as indicated by geomorphological studies (Arnoldus-Huyzendveld 2007, figs 460–1), was a quite small plateau, 1–2 hectares in extent, located in the center of the hill (under the main block of the Palace of Domitian) at about 44–46 meters above sea-level (the same height as the Capitoline). Some evidence of activity on this uppermost plateau in the seventh–sixth centuries BCE in the form of tombs and silos has been found in excavations under the first peristyle court and the Aula Regia of the Domitianic Palace, but nothing earlier, and its outline remains ill-defined. There was apparently a low cliff on the north-eastern side (built up and over by the House of the Griffins c. 100 BCE).

Two other valleys likely to have attracted early settlement are the Circus Maximus valley and the Colosseum valley. The Circus Maximus valley opens on to the same river plain as the Forum valley, and runs for a similar length (1 kilometer) inland, separating the Palatine from the Aventine and the Caelian from the Smaller Aventine, while the Colosseum valley starts between the Caelian and Esquiline hills and turns at a right angle, to separate the Caelian and the Palatine, before joining the valley of the Circus Maximus. There was a major spring (*fons Camenarum*) at the foot of the Caelian on the southern (Circus Maximus) side and probably several on the northern (Colosseum) side, providing good sources of fresh water in both valleys. An excavation in the Colosseum valley, on the site of the *meta Sudans*, a monumental fountain which marked a significant boundary between several city regions in the imperial period, found evidence in the form of votive deposits suggesting there was already a crossroads there in the eighth–seventh century BCE (Panella 1996, 2006), but more deep-level excavations are needed, going down to natural soil like those in the Forum valley.

The possibility of some Bronze Age/early Iron Age occupation of the plain of the Campus Martius – three square kilometers of open ground defined by the large loop of the Tiber north of the city – cannot be ruled out either. A series of geological cores taken across the plain in 2008–9 along the proposed route for Rome’s third underground railway (Metropolitana C) have revised our previous understanding of the original landscape (Leonardi *et al.* 2010). A shallow flood channel, 200–300 meters wide, ran down the eastern margin of the plain, alongside the Pincian, Quirinal and Capitoline hills, re-entering the mainstream at Tiber Island. The original level in the channel and along the river banks was 5–7 meters above sea-level, on a par with the river’s median high level, but a series of sandbanks formed zones of higher ground (c. 9–11.50 meters above sea-level) in the central and western sector of the plain, on which most of the Republican and early imperial monuments were to congregate. A series of springs like those in the Forum valley will have disgorged into the eastern flood channel. Two were located at the foot of the

northern side of the Capitoline (*fons Apollinaris* and the *fons* which gave its name to the *porta Fontinalis*), at least one at the foot of the Quirinal (*fons Cati*), others in the valley between the Quirinal and the Pincian hills, and at the foot of the Pincian, any one or all of which could have attracted settlement on the Forum/Capitoline model. The cores indicate c. 4–5 meters of non-natural deposits like those in the Forum valley across the eastern half of the plain well before the imperial period (by which time the average street level had risen to 12.50 meters above sea-level).

The New City of the Later Seventh and Sixth Century BCE

Around 650–600 BCE, as happened to the huts at the western corner of the Palatine, the old tradition of building in timber, reed and pisé (mud daub), with thatched roofs, was rapidly overtaken by new stone and fired-clay technologies, which swept through the Mediterranean world in the second half of the seventh century BCE. In Rome, foundations were built of tuff stone, in squared blocks, their superstructure in combinations of tuff and mudbrick, with roofs made of terracotta tiles, manufactured locally, using fine potter's clay extracted from a thick bed which has been identified beneath the *Velabrum* (Ammerman *et al.* 2008). The period fits into Rome's historical record at the reigns of kings Ancus Marcius (642–616) and Tarquinius Priscus (616–578), the latter reputedly son of Demaratus of Corinth, who fled his home city in 657 BCE, taking his family and three terracotta craftsmen with him, and became Marcius's right-hand man, credited with having introduced the art to Italy (Pliny *HN* 35.152). The new expertise in quarrying and stoneworking may also have been imported, at least to start with, but the stone, like the clay, was extremely local, a grey pebble tuff (known in Italian as *cappellaccio*), extracted underground, from the bedrock of the Capitoline, Palatine and Quirinal hills (for the latter see Claridge 1993, fig. 23)

The city in the center of the Forum valley was not only refashioned in stone but replanned, on an orthogonal grid oriented to the points of the compass (possibly in some sense linked to the *Roma Quadrata* – “Squared Rome” – of the written sources), with its streets paved in blocks of tuff. The Regia was redesigned, so that its south side now aligned with an east–west street on the new grid (giving rise to its distinctive triangular shape). Substantial tuff walls on the same alignment, standing 2–3 courses high, have been encountered in excavations under the later Roman Forum (Gjerstad 1953, fig.20), under the Basilica Julia (Carettoni and Fabbrini 1961, 59), under the Temple of Castor (Nielsen 1990, 100), and on a north–south alignment between that and the *fons Juturnae*, where there are also traces of a street (Steinby 2012.1, 26). It seems, at least for the duration of the sixth century, the new city might not

have had a forum, or if it did, it was much smaller and/or in a different position, perhaps closer to the Senate House of the period, whose site has not yet been established but was near the later one and reputedly faced due south (Pliny, *HN* 7.212). Similarly aligned are a range of sixth-century buildings located further into the mouth of the Sacra Via valley, under the Forum end of the House of the Vestals, and the long staircase which leads (in a much later rebuilding) from the Temple of Vesta up to the north corner of the Palatine. However, the grid was apparently confined to that immediate area. The remains of two large sixth-century houses further inland, excavated under the Forum of Caesar, preserved the alignment of the pre-existing Bronze Age street (Delfino 2014, 87–93) and the street system associated with a row of houses of the later sixth century BCE found midway up the Sacra Via valley (on the Palatine side) followed the contours of the rising ground (Carandini and Carafa 1995). The houses' tiled roofs and courtyard layout (see Platts, Chapter 14i in this volume and Figure 14.1) greatly improved the collection of rainwater, which was stored in subterranean cisterns, in addition to which some houses sank their own wells to tap the fresh water in the aquifer. The tuff for the construction of the buildings in the valley of the Sacra Via was probably obtained from the adjacent flank of the Palatine hill, where there is large depression in the north-eastern side, caused in post Roman times by the collapse of the roofs of the quarries in the bedrock (Tomei 1993).

The Capitoline hill also underwent massive redevelopment in the second half of the sixth century BCE, when the new temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus (Best and Greatest) was installed on the summit at the river end. Excavations under Palazzo Caffarelli (now part of the Capitoline Museums) have exposed parts of an enormous artificial platform some 4,000 square meters in area (54 meters wide by 74 meters long), and 8–10 meters high, built of earth compacted within a framework of stone quarried from the bedrock below, the foundations datable about 550–500 BCE. It was situated towards the edge of the plateau, so as to leave the center free and avoid a pre-existing temple of Jupiter Feretrius (“subduer of enemies,” reputedly built by Romulus). Its rear extended over the edge of the cliff face on solid stone buttressing from below, which probably continued round the cliffs, enhancing their verticality and impregnability. Similar measures may have been applied to the cliffs at the north end, turning the natural hilltop fortress of the Bronze Age into a Greek-style citadel. The project is likely to have involved improved access to the south summit in the form of a street (*clivus Capitolinus*) leading up from the Forum and flights of stairs at its river end, which appear on a fragment of the Marble Plan, perhaps the *scalae Tarquitiae*, supposedly named after Tarquinius Superbus (Festus 496 L). No trace of the Jupiter temple itself has survived, but the platform faces SSE, and presumably the temple did too, looking past the south-western flank of the Palatine hill, down the length of the valley of the Circus Maximus. The platform took the temple up to about 53 meters above sea-level, on a par with the Quirinal and Viminal and thus

into full view from the wider plain of Latium and the mountains beyond.

By the first century BCE Roman historical tradition ascribed the Capitoline temple either to Tarquinius Priscus or his son Superbus (535–509) in association with a number of other massive building projects assigned to kings of the sixth century BCE, for which the archaeological evidence is less secure. A circuit of city walls, attributed to Servius Tullius (reg. 578–535), has not been found, possibly because they were dismantled and integrated into the circuit of the fourth century BCE (Cifani 1998), or because they were built mainly of wood and mudbrick, using stone only for the gates (the Porta Collina, on the Quirinal, could be one, Cifani 1998, 381–7). It is also possible that there was no large circuit, but that the Palatine hilltop was fortified separately (like the Capitoline); it reportedly had gates (Pliny *HN* 3.66 says three or four) on the sides facing the city center, the *Romana* (the principal gate, probably at the north corner), *Romanula* (above the *Velabrum*) and *Mugonia* (towards the Sacra Via). The Circus Maximus, assigned to Tarquinius Priscus or Superbus, or both, is currently archaeologically a blank before the first century CE; it may well have been coeval with the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus on the Capitoline, since it was the venue for the *ludi Romani* in his honor, but if so, we have no idea what form it took. The Cloaca Maxima, or Great Drain, which canalized the stream which ran the length of the Forum valley, round the *Velabrum* and into the Tiber through the harbor (Bauer 1993, figs 169–70), would seem to be a sensible precursor to the replanning of the city center, and is assigned in the sources to Ancus Marcius, but the oldest visible section, beside the Temple of Castor, dates from the fifth century BCE at the earliest (Bauer 1993).

In the late seventh–early sixth century BCE, burials and votive deposits spread over many more parts of the Quirinal, Viminal, Esquiline (Cispian and Oppian) and Caelian, which, if the city was in fact walled at that time along the fourth-century circuit, the walls will have included. However, it is not clear whether the land was actually being more densely settled or was just being used by a growing population on the low ground for increased production of food, timber etc. The votives could relate primarily to agricultural and other farming activities, while the pattern of burials could be the result of a change in the law (later codified in the Twelve Tables of the mid-fifth century BCE), which brought Roman practice more into line with other Iron Age communities in Latium and Etruria and excluded burial from the city center, though it continued as an elite reward (as in the case of the consul Valerius Publicola, see below). The areas of the hilltops concerned, together with their height above and increasing distance from the city on the low ground, make it likely that huts would be built for the laborers who worked the land, tended woods and orchards, and looked after livestock (cattle, sheep, goats), and that some of the buildings would be given tiled roofs to collect rainwater. Fresh water would have to be fetched from the river

or the springs in the valleys, or from sources out on the plain of Latium, though there were none in the immediate vicinity.

In the historical tradition each king was also believed to have set up house on a different hill: Romulus only a *casa* (hut), but he erected two, one on the Palatine and the other on the Capitoline; the others built a *domus*: Numa Pompilius on the Quirinal, though he had built an official residence (*regia*) near the Temple of Vesta; Tullius Hostilius on the *Velia*, on a site later occupied partly by the Temple of the Penates and partly by the house of P. Valerius Publicola (Cic. *Rep.* 2.31.53), though other sources place Hostilius's house on the Caelian; Ancus Marcius "at the upper end of the Sacra Via, where the Temple of the Lares is now"; Tarquinius Priscus on the Palatine near the Porta Mugonia, "by the street on the left"; Servius Tullius on the Esquiline, "above the *clivus Orbius* or *Urbius*"; Tarquinius Superbus, the last king, also on the Esquiline, but "above the *clivus Pullius* at the Fagutal grove". Unfortunately, except for the Regia and the Temple of Vesta, we have no idea where any of these places were. The *Velia* is particularly difficult to pin down, although it is mentioned by several other sources; some archaeological maps make it the saddle at the head of the valley of the Sacra Via, others a hillock on the Oppian side of the valley, later built over by the Basilica of Maxentius/Constantine; another possibility is that it was a lesser height on the Palatine, which has disappeared under the platform supporting the western wing of the Domitianic palace, towards the north-eastern end of the Farnese Gardens. No hilltop has yet produced evidence of substantial houses in stone of the right period but supposing the tradition had an element of truth, for the political leaders to move their town houses to the high ground (while keeping Numa's Regia for official duties) would be an interesting development. The land they built on was presumably their own and no doubt they had armies of slaves to carry their water. However, if true, the tradition also indicates that the initiative was short-lived. Two of the houses had since been replaced by public temples, and we are told by other sources that P. Valerius Publicola, one of the first consuls of the Republic, who had built his house beside the temple of the Penates on the *Velia*, had it demolished by order of the Senate, which paid for a new one at the bottom of the hill, where he was subsequently honored also with a public burial.

Some elite expansion in the sixth century onto the plain of the Campus Martius is hinted at by the sources (Purcell 1996, 184–6) and by stone quarries on the north side of the Quirinal, and might be verified should archaeological excavations ever manage to reach the relevant levels. On the river plain further upstream, a sizeable country residence dating from about 550 BCE, laid out around a courtyard, on stone foundations, was excavated in the 1990s (Terrenato 2001). Continuously rebuilt and enlarged until at least the second century CE, the property was cardinally aligned, like the sixth-century city in the Forum valley. Since that is also the alignment of the

monumental buildings in the center of the plain of the Campus Martius, the oldest visible components of which date back to c. 300 BCE (Temples A and C at Largo Argentina, founded at 9 meters above sea-level), it is possible that they, too, were built on ground already consolidated by stone structures of an earlier age. The temple of Apollo Medicus (which survives as rebuilt in 34 BCE), in the southernmost sector, shares the alignment, and was reputedly founded in the sixth century BCE (as an altar, adjacent to a spring at the foot of the Capitoline). However, no archaeological excavation has yet been able to descend so deep on the Campus Martius plain. The presence of the medieval and early modern city, which was centered there, has added an extra 6–9 meters to the overburden, superimposing a dense palimpsest of later structures over the Roman; in the event that those can be negotiated, the local water table (significantly higher now than in antiquity) then usually intervenes to block any further progress (the excavation of the last remnants of the Ara Pacis in the 1930s was achieved by freezing the surrounding soil).

In the early fifth century BCE, the sixth-century walls found under the Roman Forum, the Basilica Julia and the *Lacus Iuturnae* were demolished, the ground was levelled upwards by some 0.90 meters to 10.65 meters above sea-level, and an open space approximating to the Roman Forum as we see it now took shape, on a new alignment, reverting more or less to that of the Sacra Via. Two large temples were built in quick succession at each end, on the shoulders of higher ground to either side of the valley, both raised on very tall stone podia, and both facing north-east, the Temple of Castor in 484 BCE alongside the spring of *Iuturna*, and the Temple of Saturn in 476 BCE near the Senate House. New stone buildings laid out across the valley between them, under the Basilica Julia, were probably the atrium-houses built by the consular aristocracy of the new age (see Platts, [Chapter 14i](#) in this volume). The open space of the new Forum, as sampled in Boni's trench of 1903–4, was resurfaced several times in the course of the next four centuries, the level rising each time until the final paving, in travertine at 12.76 meters above sea-level, was laid in the Augustan period (c. 12 BCE).

Most other parts of the sixth-century city probably remained unchanged for at least the next 200 years. The large houses in the valley of the Sacra Via, for example, stood for the next 400 years, until badly damaged by fire in the mid-second century BCE, when they were replaced by others on a much smaller scale (Carandini and Papi 2005). Elsewhere, although the fifth century is not very visible, a discernible horizon occurs in the fourth century, traditionally associated with the aftermath of the capture and sack of the city by the Gauls in 390 BCE. The excavations under the Forum of Caesar encountered the debris of major fire in the fourth century (possibly the Gallic sack), after which the ground level was raised and the older housing replaced by a series of smaller units, rather randomly laid out. In the third–second century BCE those gave way to an open expanse of tuff paving, associated with a solid

enclosure wall, perhaps one of the Republican market-forums mentioned in the sources, supplying luxury foodstuffs to the elite residents of the inner Forum valley.

The Republican City of the Fourth to Second Centuries BCE

A lasting development of the fourth century BCE was a circuit of city walls in stone, probably continuous, of which short stretches are still standing or were visible in the past at various points on the Quirinal, Viminal, Esquiline, Caelian, and Aventine. They are built of large blocks of tuff, combining *cappellaccio* and other varieties that will have been shipped down river from Fidenae (18 kilometers to the north, conquered by Rome in 426 BCE) and from Grotta Oscura (on the west bank, Roman territory after the conquest of Veii in 396 BCE). The manner of their construction is closely paralleled by urban fortifications of the fourth century BCE at Pompeii and other cities of southern Italy, with a high earthen rampart (*agger*) on the inside. Across the Quirinal–Viminal–Esquiline plateau (where they were vulnerable to attack from the plain of Latium which lies on the same level), they were also reinforced on the outside by a large ditch, parts of which were excavated in the late nineteenth century, measuring about 36 meters wide by 15 meters deep, somewhat larger than the dimensions reported by Dionysius of Halicarnassus (9.68.3–4), by whose time it was 300 years old and may well have lost its original profile. Livy (6.32.1) records that the project was set in hand by the censors of 378 BCE. How long works took is not stated, but repairs were already needed in 353 BCE (Livy 7.20.9). The *cappellaccio* blocks are thought to have been recycled from a hypothetical sixth-century circuit, whose course would have coincided in places, but although many of the blocks show signs of reuse they do not necessarily derive from an earlier city wall; any sixth-century buildings could have supplied them, and for that matter *cappellaccio* was not confined to the sixth century BCE, it continued in use until the first century BCE. Even the fourth-century circuit is largely hypothetical (compare those drawn on Maps 1, 3, 4), especially difficult to reconstruct where it left the eastern hills and crossed the depths of the valleys, and on the side towards the river, between the Aventine and the Capitoline. There, various solutions are possible and have been proposed, the simplest being to run the walls straight to the river from some suitable point on the river side of the Aventine and from the river end of the Capitoline. No part of the plain of the Campus Martius was walled, it seems, though the possibility of an outer curtain along the margin of the eastern flood channel should be borne in mind.

The visible sections of the walls show numerous signs of repair, at least down

to the first century BCE, the later phases using concrete, after which parts began to be dismantled and built up against or over in the first three centuries CE. The ditch on the Quirinal–Esquiline was filled in at the beginning of the second century CE, perhaps with the spoil from the clearance of the site for Trajan’s Forum, an operation that could also have removed the stretch of wall between the Quirinal and Capitoline. Many sections remained standing, however, as did all the city gates, 37 of them by 73 CE (Pliny *HN* 3.66). Two gates are still standing, as rebuilt at the end of the first century BCE (Porta Caelimontana and Porta Esquilina); the positions of a further four, the Porta Collina (on the Quirinal), Porta Viminalis (on the Viminal), Porta Capena (in the Circus Maximus valley, between the Caelian and the Aventine), Porta Raudusculana (in the valley between the Aventine and the Smaller Aventine) are known through excavation; another 16 named in the written sources have yet to be located.

Walling the city in stone was significant in many ways (see Goodman, [Chapter 4](#) in this volume), whether or not it had already been walled to some extent before, but the amount of habitation there was on the hilltops within the walls in the fourth century is no more certain than in the sixth century, and might actually have been less. Burial grounds developed outside the Quirinal and Esquiline gates, and the scatter of votive deposits characteristic of earlier ages continues inside, with no sign of anything more substantial, although the written sources suggest that, starting in the late fourth century BCE, a number of temples were built on the hills by wealthy families, at their own expense, on their own land, either rebuilding older shrines or new foundations in celebration of military or other successes. About fifteen such temples are attested on the Quirinal before the imperial period (Coarelli [2014](#), 81–243). Long stretches of revetment in solid stone along the lower slopes of the southwestern flanks of the Palatine and Caelian, datable to the fourth century, are unlikely to be part of the fortifications and may represent agricultural terracing, or in some cases the substructures for extensions to the precincts of temples set on the edges of the hilltops. On the terrace at the western corner of the Palatine, adjoining the small sixth-century temple which followed after the huts (see above), a large temple of the late fourth century BCE was built very close to the edge, looking out from the hill to the Aventine, subsequently razed to its foundations, though its place continued to be marked by a smaller structure (an altar or shrine). It is currently identified as the temple of Victory, which Livy (10.33.9) says was built on the Palatine by an aedile in 307–294 BCE using public money (from fines), but the scale of the excavated building, the terracottas associated with it, and its removal, might better suit a Palatine temple of Juno Sospita, only known from a passage in Ovid (*Fast.* 2.55–59) who knew it to be “long gone” by his day. Another large temple built alongside the other, securely identified as that of the Great Mother (Magna Mater), Greek Cybele, whose cult was introduced to Rome from Phrygia in 205 BCE, may have necessitated the move. In 197 Juno Sospita was given a

new temple on the Forum Holitorium on the plain of the Forum Boarium, directly below the Capitoline (probably the central temple of the three at S.Nicola in Carcere, which is the same size as the razed temple on the Palatine). This was dedicated in 194, shortly before the temple to Magna Mater was dedicated in 191 BCE. The written sources suggest that the temple of Victory is better located further along the terrace, towards the northern corner of the hill, where it had a street (*clivus*) named after it, at the bottom of which was an ancient shrine of Vica Pota, which in its turn is said to be below the *Velia* (Asc. *Pis.* 52.13), on the same level as P. Valerius Publicola's replacement house, noted earlier.

From the fourth century BCE onwards, temples proliferated on the plain of the Forum Boarium, around the port. The twin temples at S. Omobono, raised on a 4-meter platform, were among the first; the temple for the harbor god Portunus, dating from around 300 BCE, was raised on a podium 6 meters high; the Forum Boarium itself (cattle market) and the associated cult of Hercules (which was made public by the censor Appius Claudius Caecus in 312 BCE, at the same time that he completed Rome's first public aqueduct, the aqua Appia, which terminated nearby, see below) are likely to have been monumentalized, but the Forum Boarium has not yet been traced on the ground, and the visible remains of the Great Altar of Hercules (under S. Maria in Cosmedin) date from the second century BCE.

Much of the land on the plain of the Campus Martius outside the walls, including the *campus* itself, dedicated to Mars (Livy 2.5.2; Plut. *Publ.* 8.1), was owned by the city by the later fifth century BCE, if not before. It was farmed as a *villa Publica* (State Farm) for the public wheat ration, and its fields used for military training and grazing sheep. No remains of the villa, *campus* or a great altar of Mars have been found, their locations in the center of the plain can be broadly defined on the basis of the written sources (Wiseman 1993). A temple which had reportedly been added to the altar of Apollo Medicus (see above) by one of Julius Caesar's ancestors after a plague in 433 BCE was restored or rebuilt in the late fourth century, as other temples began to spread in a line between there and the *campus* (as noted above, some of those excavated at Largo Argentina were already in place by c. 300 BCE). In the course of the fourth and third centuries BCE more land along the south-western margins was donated or sold to the public estate by aristocratic families to be developed into additional public amenities, notably by C. Flaminius, who as censor in 220 BCE dedicated both the new *via Flaminia*, which led across the plain from the *porta Fontinalis* (see Rice, Chapter 9 in this volume) and the Circus Flaminius, the latter on meadows bearing his family name (*prata Flaminia*). The construction of the circus (whose location, parallel to the Tiber bank alongside the Tiber Island, is known) apparently involved a new drain, similar to the Cloaca Maxima in the Forum valley, which was found in the 1880s leading to the Tiber, at a right angle to the

circus, channeling underground a natural stream that had previously flowed above ground (in the Tiber flood channel). Numerous temples commemorating military victories were erected around the circus in the course of the second and first centuries BCE, facing its longer axis, not because the circus was ever used much for horse- or chariot-racing, but because of its particular function as a point of assembly for triumphs (see Map 16).

In 312 BCE the *aqua Appia*, the first of Rome's long-distance aqueducts to be built with public funds (see Evans, [Chapter 11](#) in this volume), greatly augmented the supply of fresh water within the walled city, but delivered none of it directly to the hills, only to the low ground. It tapped a subterranean spring on the plain of Latium 16 kilometers to the east of the city and travelled deep under the Caelian and Aventine hills to a single distribution point (at an estimated height of 15 meters above sea-level) on the plain of the Forum Boarium, inside the *porta Trigemina* at a place called *Salinae* (saltworks), close to the river (Ashby 1935, 49–54). Its initial purpose may have been to provide extra water in the event of a siege, when the population outside the walls would move inside, and the terminus point was chosen simply so that the surplus could drain straight into the river, but it is also possible that it was designed specifically to serve a growing population in the valley of the Circus Maximus and on the slopes of the Aventine, for which the local springs were not enough. In 241 BCE a new street (the *clivus Publicius*) was led up to the Aventine, from a point adjacent to the aqueduct. (After modifications in the Augustan period the Appian Water had a wider distribution along its route and was also extended across the river to the plain of Transtiberim, whose ground level was about the same.) Three more public aqueducts were constructed in the third and second centuries BCE, all entering the city underground and hugely increasing the supply of water to the lower city. The *Anio Vetus* of 272–269 BCE (c. 80 kilometers long) and the *Marcia* of 144–140 BCE (91 kilometers) were managed by large underground collection tanks inside the Esquiline Gate (at 48 meters above sea-level) and the Viminal Gate (at 59 meters above sea level) respectively, and delivered extra water to the lower slopes of the Quirinal, Viminal, Cispian and Oppian hills as well as the city in the Forum and Colosseum valleys, which were presumably becoming ever more densely settled; in 174 BCE the censors reportedly embarked on what will have been a lengthy program of re-laying the streets in the city center and redefining the city blocks (Livy 41.27.5), which may have facilitated the installation of the new water supply, together with the drains necessary to dispose of its wastage. A branch from the *Marcia* reportedly reached the Capitoline; whether a similar attempt was made to take the *Anio Vetus* to the Palatine is not known; the small *aqua Tepula* of 125 BCE (led in from the Alban Hills) may have been routed specifically to do so, since elite housing develops higher up the Palatine at about the same time or soon after (see part ii of this chapter).

ii) From 100 BCE to 600 CE

Amanda Claridge

The City of the First Century BCE

Around 100 BCE, as attested by the standing monuments ([Table 5.1](#)), building in the city entered a period of exponential change, which lasted more or less continuously for the next 500 years. Funded by the wealth of empire and the concomitant rise in the personal wealth of Rome's ruling upper class, amongst whom investment and competition in the built environment had become an essential way of life, building technology underwent its second revolution since the seventh century. Finer finishing stones were sought further afield: peperino tuff came from the Alban hills; travertine limestone from the plain of Latium near Tivoli; white marble, initially imported from Greece, by the 40s BCE came also from the Apuan Alps of Italy, near modern Carrara; and colored stones came from every part of the world. Concrete also came into widespread structural use, an aggregate of tuff rubble and mortar made with lime and the local pozzolana sand that was a far cheaper alternative to bulk stone, both in terms of the raw materials and the skilled labor it required (Mogetta [2015](#)).

The strength of concrete and its hydraulic properties (its ability to set under water) were particularly suited to the construction of conduits, drains and building foundations in Rome's often waterlogged conditions, and gave it many other advantages in the development of an increasingly elevated built environment, both below and above ground. Terracing, building platforms and hillside extensions all became lighter and simpler to construct, as concrete walls, arches and vaulting gradually replaced much of the heavy-duty stonework of the past. The speed with which buildings could be built – and rebuilt – increased, accelerating also the rate of urban build-up, since concrete, unlike stone, was labor-intensive to demolish, had no intrinsic value and was not easy to reuse (except as landfill); redevelopers both Roman and post-Roman tended wherever possible to leave it in situ. Concrete is omnipresent in the surviving archaeological record as a result, whereas the finer bulk stone with which it was combined has often been lost, making the remains difficult to interpret and reconstruct, but there is no mistaking the sheer increase in the quantity of building itself and the multiplicity of new building types and architectural forms that came into use, as the functions of urban space and sources of patronage diversified. The traditional staples of the

prestige built environment – temples, town houses, and tombs – and the more recent arrivals, such as aqueducts, arches, bridges, wharves, warehousing, markets, public fountains, porticoes, basilicas, theaters, arenas, circuses, stadiums, libraries, baths, bakeries, military barracks, and apartment blocks, became materially larger (especially taller) and more complex (if not always in design then in decoration) every time they were modified or rebuilt (and by all accounts many were rebuilt far more often than was strictly necessary). At the top of the range, in public works and private projects, change was an integral part of the process (and can be followed in its individual contexts in every other chapter in this volume). Here we shall focus only on the changes that can be detected in the archaeological record concerning the broader pattern of settlement on the site, most strikingly the shift of elite occupation from the low ground to the hilltops, which transformed the Palatine in particular, but also involved every other hill on the east bank, as the city expanded out of the river valley and merged with its territory on the surrounding plains into a much larger unit, blurring the older distinctions between town and country.

At this point it is salutary to note that while ancient Romans evidently always saw the hills as hills, giving each and every one a name (qualified as a *mons* or *collis* – what caused the difference in terminology is not clear), many of which derived from species of trees (*Viminal*, *Esquiliae*, *Fagatal*) or individual families (*Caelius*, *Cispius*, *Oppius*), at no time did they name the valleys or plains that we see (the names used here are all modern). This presumably means that their inhabitants had no perception of them as such, not (as frequently assumed) because they did not form part of the city, but quite the reverse, because they *were* the city (the *Urbs*), in a way that the hills originally were not. In fact, for Cicero in the mid-first century BCE (*Dom.* 28.74), the *plebs* or ordinary people of Rome who dwelt on the hills (*montani*) and those who lived in the countryside beyond the walls (*pagani*) were still separate communities, with their own *conventicula* (meetings) and *concilia* (councils), distinct from the *urbani*, who presumably lived in the rest of the city. The right to such assemblies had been granted by “the elders.” From Varro we learn that they had their own annual festivals. The *pagani* celebrated the *Paganalia* (Varro *Ling.* 6.24), the *montani* celebrated the *Septimontium*, the seven hills within the walls (Varro *Ling.* 5.41), which was not originally a public festival, i.e. of the Roman people (the *urbani*). It may not have become one until the Flavian period (*LTUR* 4: 268 [F.Coarelli]), when Domitian converted the family *domus* on the Quirinal, where he had been born in 51 CE, *ad malum Punicam* (“at the Carthaginian pomegranate tree,” a local landmark, perhaps planted at the time of the Punic Wars), into a temple of the Gens Flavia (Suet. *Dom.* 1; Coarelli 2014, 194–207). Varro (*Ling.* 5.45–54) also mentions an old procession of the *Argei*, which first visited 27 *sacella* (shrines) located at various points within the four regions of the fourth-century BCE city, apparently all on the hills, depositing small human figures made of

straw (*argei*), and then in a second procession collected and threw the dolls into the Tiber from the Sublician bridge (Ov. *Fast.* 3.791; 5.621). One of the shrines is probably recorded in a boundary stone of late Republican date, found near S. Vito (on the Esquiline), which names an association of the *montani* of *mons Oppius*, whose priests (*magistri et flamines*) had enclosed the land around a *sacellum*, levelled it and planted trees (CIL 6.32455). The ritual, probably one of purification (of the hills alone, perhaps), was still being celebrated in the Augustan period (Dion. Hal. 1.83.3) but by then Varro (who was using an old list of Argei sacrifices to identify the names of hills whose names had been lost) could only find a few of the shrines still in place. We hear of one on the *Velia* being removed by Cn. Domitius Calvinus (cos. 40 BCE) when enlarging his house there (Fest. 272 L). Augustus's reorganization of the city into 14 regions, each presided over by a magistrate or *curator*, saw the replacement of the old local assemblies and the communities they represented by a new system of smaller units, based on the streets (*vici*) and new community shrines – the compital altars, set up at crossroads.

By the end of the first century BCE, Rome had largely sorted itself (or rather, its aristocratic class, led by Augustus and his party had sorted it) into a city of two tiers. The low ground was filled with public spaces surrounded by the bulk of the urban working population, who were densely packed onto the plains beside the river, on both banks, and stacked in terraces on the lower slopes of the hills, while the uppermost ground was more thinly settled, as it had always been, but now dominated by the town houses of the wealthy and their dependents as well as their gardens. Water, as ever, was a key ingredient. Three of Rome's next five aqueducts were directed primarily to the hills, first the *aqua Julia*, completed in 33 BCE by Marcus Agrippa (though given the name it could have been begun by Julius Caesar), replacing the *Tepula*, then the *Anio Novus* and *Claudia*, both of enormous capacity and completed by Claudius in 52 CE. The lower city was not neglected. In 19 BCE Agrippa also completed the *aqua Virgo*, supplying his many public works on the plain of the Campus Martius, including the city's first public baths and an artificial lake (to which he diverted additional water from the Tiber, carried in an open conduit designed to serve a dual purpose as a flood channel: Filippi 2010). At the same time the *Appia*, *Anio Vetus* and *Marcia* were renovated and their distribution extended and improved. In 2 BCE, the *Alsietina*, financed by Augustus and sourced on the right bank, delivered (not very nice water) directly to the plain of Transtiberim. Trajan paid for a much better water, the *aqua Traiana*, to be brought from Lake Bracciano to Transtiberim in 103 CE, and the last new aqueduct, the *Alexandrina*, was directed to the Campus Martius, where it supplied Alexander Severus's rebuild of the baths of Nero in 226 CE.

In the first century BCE a new generation of multistorey developments rose up the hillsides, carried on wider terraces, connected horizontally by streets

(*vici*) on the same level and to the levels above and below by staircases (*scalae*), flights of steps (*gradus*) or ramps (*clivus*). An early example is the so-called Tabularium, an artificial substructure installed against the flank of the Capitoline hill above the north-west end of the Forum, supporting a large platform (c. 9 meters high) for a building on the edge of the depression between the two summits, now occupied by the Palazzo Senatorio (Mura Sommella 1999). The project is probably to be identified with one approved by Q. Lutatius Catulus, consul of 78 BCE, recorded in a lost inscription from the site (*CIL* 6.1314), which named both a *tabularium* (an archive), presumably attached to the (anonymous) building(s) on top, and a *substructio* (that visible today). The substructure is faced in solid peperino tuff from the ground upwards and incorporated three streets, each probably replacing an older route in the same position. A steep flight of steps led up from the vicinity of the temple of Saturn to the temple of Veiovis (dating from 192 BCE, around which the platform was shaped to fit), at which level it intersected with a horizontal street along the front of the hill (roofed with a combination of stone arches and concrete vaults, and open through stone arcades on the side towards the Forum), off which another street at right angles led through the platform to the depression behind. The plan of the building on top is unknown and its function is therefore obscure: a state public record office, the state treasury, the *atrium Libertatis* (where the citizen lists were kept and slaves were freed), and the temple of Juno Moneta have been proposed.

Most of the other buildings that encased the flanks of the Capitoline at the time seem to have been housing, though only a few traces can be seen today (on the north side) and they date from the early second century CE. The summits proper, however, were reserved for the gods, especially that at the southern end. Here the *area Capitolina*, an estimated 1.5–2.0 hectares in extent, had been occupied at least since the sixth century BCE by the temples of Jupiter Feretrius and Jupiter Optimus Maximus (dedicated also to Juno and Minerva as the Capitoline triad) and their precinct. In the later third century BCE temples are recorded being added to the *area* in celebration of some major military victories, for the goddesses *Fides Populi Romani* (Trust of the Roman People), *Mens* (Thought, related to Juno), Ops (Plenty, wife of Saturn, whose temple stood below), and *Venus Erycina* (Love). They were probably located on the south-western fringes, so as not to obstruct Jupiter's view out from the hill, and relatively small, to leave as much space as possible for the huge crowds that attended the major religious ceremonies of state and triumphs addressed to him. Altars were provided for many other deities, mostly female, at various times (including one for the gens Julia) but no more temples are heard of until the benefactions of Augustus. He refounded the temple of Jupiter Feretrius in 33 BCE, reportedly on a larger scale and a slightly different site, leaving the imprint of the old building still visible (*RG* 19.2; *Nep. Att.* 20.3; *Dion. Hal.* 2.34.2), and in 22 BCE in fulfilment of a

personal vow (made after a lucky escape in Spain in 26–5) added a new temple for Jupiter Tonans (the Thunderer: *RG* 19.1; Suet. *Aug.* 29.1; Cass. Dio 54.4.2–4) in front of that of Jupiter Optimus Maximus, which he also restored at some stage, without putting his name on it (*RG* 20.1). Coins of 19–18 BCE indicate that Augustus also built a small shrine for Mars Ultor (probably adjacent to that of Venus) to house the legionary standards, which had returned to Rome from Parthia in 20 BCE, pending their dedication in a far larger temple for the god in the Forum of Augustus (on which work started in 19 BCE but was not finished until 2 BCE). The northern summit (generally referred to as the *Arx*) was much smaller and its highest point was kept clear as a point of augury, laid out as a *templum* (Varro, *Ling.* 7.8), but it seems that housing was not otherwise excluded, although patricians had been banned from living there after the execution of Marcus Manlius in 384 BCE (Livy 6.20.13), when his house on the *Arx* was razed and the site used in 344 BCE for the temple of Juno Moneta. No other temples are recorded, and the outer margins of this end of the hill were apparently extended by radial concrete substructures in the imperial period, presumably supporting additional housing on staggered terraces (Brancia di Apricena 2002, figs 19–20).

On the Palatine hill the archaeology no less than the literary record (Papi 1998; Coarelli 2012, 287–346) indicates that, by the early first century BCE, the houses of the political elite not only jostled for prime positions on the lower slopes convenient to the Forum, as did Cicero's (possibly identified under the substructures of the west wing of the Domitianic palace), and along the north-east side of the hill towards the Sacra Via and the Colosseum valley (Panella 1990, 46–7), but had spread up to the higher level terraces on the north-west and south-west (the side facing the Circus Maximus) and even onto the hilltop itself. Examples of the latter, dating from c. 100–60 BCE, are the House of the Griffins under the central wing of the Domitianic palace (see Platts, Chapter 14i in this volume) and the so-called Houses of Livia and Augustus (Figure 14.2), which were built up against and over the edge of the upper tuff plateau, on two or three stories, so that they looked both outwards from the top of the hill and inwards towards its center. Various practical reasons might have combined to favor this development upwards, such as the advent of aqueduct water mooted above, the pressure on space lower down, or the views, fresher air and additional space to be had on high. Although we lack the equivalent archaeological evidence, the written sources indicate that the *domus* of the elite were expanding onto the Oppian and Quirinal hills in the same period. In 58 BCE Cicero's friend T. Pomponius Atticus (110–32 BCE), a banker of equestrian rank, inherited a rather old-fashioned but elegant house on the Quirinal, possessed of a beautiful *silva* (wooded park or grove) (Nep. *Att.* 13.1–2), probably dating from 130–120 BCE (Coarelli 2014, 268–9). In the case of the Palatine, however, the hilltop had further attractions.

Unlike the Capitoline, or Aventine (where Servius Tullius is credited with

building a grand temple of Diana), the Palatine had no major temple on its summit, only one of unknown size for Jupiter Victor vowed by a consul in 295 BCE, until Octavian founded an entirely new temple of Apollo and Diana there in 36–28 BCE, whose podium survives, on the site of what had previously been a house (that currently and confusingly known as the House of Augustus). The (relatively few) older Palatine temples and shrines named in the sources – *Febris* (Fever), *Pales* (protector of sheep and cattle), *Luna Noctiluca* (Moonlight), *Vica Pota* (Victory and Possession), and a *Jupiter Invictus* – were either located on the next terrace down from the summit (like the temples at the west corner and the temple of Victory already noted), or lower still (e.g. the *Lupercal*, which enshrined one of the natural springs, near the *Velabrum*). Instead, the written sources indicate that, at least by the mid first century BCE, the hilltop bore a series of monuments associated with the foundation of the city by Romulus, all or most of which continued to exist (rebuilt as necessary) within the imperial palace down to late antiquity: a point of augury (called *auguratorium* rather than the usual *auguraculum*), a place known as *Roma Quadrata*, where some of Romulus’s augury equipment was stored, his own house (*casa Romuli*) and the hut of his foster father (*tugurium Faustuli*), where he slept the night before taking the auspices, and another hut consecrated to Mars (Romulus’s divine father), the *curia Saliorum*, where the *Salii* (who performed ritual dances in honor of Mars) kept the augur’s staff (*lituus*) that Romulus used, found miraculously preserved among the ruins of the hut, burnt in the Gallic sack (Cic. *Div.* 1.17; Val. Max. 1.1; Livy 5.41; Plut. *Cam.* 32). The latter discovery sounds as if could have been a real and quite recent event, perhaps made in digging the foundations for one of the new houses in the vicinity of the *auguratorium* (presumably a real feature of the summit which was interpreted as having to do with augury) or in clearing the ground around it. The new houses were substantial structures, requiring foundations dug down to bedrock, which lay not far below surface and was probably full of traces of huts, votives, and other buried features of the remote past, some of which were left in place but built over (for an odd case, see Zink 2015), others lifted, rebuilt and reconsecrated as part of the developing landscape.

At the moment, modern excavators strive to position most of the “Romulean” monuments among the various older levels exposed on the lower terrace at the western corner of the hill, because they are described (Solinus 1.17) as “at the top of the *scalae Caci* (Stairs of Cacus),” which are traditionally identified with the upper end of a narrow street (actually a ramp or *clivus*, hardly a stair) leading up to the terrace. Hence, a possible site for the *casa Romuli* has been identified in front of the temple of Magna Mater, one for *Roma Quadrata* on the lower level of the “House of Augustus,” or, in desperation, they are reconstructed on an invented six-storey extension to the hillside below it (see Carandini 2017). More logically, however, they and the upper end of the *scalae Caci*, and the other monuments, especially the *auguratorium*, should

all be situated on the summit as it is now defined, at the center of the later palace (see [Figure 5.1](#)). There is, for instance, a more suitable candidate for the *scalae Caci* ascending within the adjacent substructures of the west wing of the palace, while the “area Palatina” (the trapezoidal open space in front of the central wing of the palace, where the ground has collapsed into the subterranean quarries) is the findspot of a group of votive pillars in peperino tuff (Tomei [1993](#), 655–8), probably of Augustan date, individually inscribed “*Remureine*” (apparently a reference to Romulus’s twin and co-founder Remus), “*Anabestas*” (meaning unknown), “*Marspiter*” (an archaic name for Mars); one commemorated “Fertur Resius, king of the Aequicoli, who first introduced the fetial law, thanks to which the Romans learned discipline” (*CIL* 6.1302). The area could correspond to Ovid’s “place where Rome was founded” (*hoc primum condita Roma loco est*), which his book saw as it arrived on the Palatine from the direction of the Sacra Via (Ov. *Tr.* 3.1.31–34; Wiseman [2012](#)). Several sources place the *auguratorium* and *Roma Quadrata* somewhere in front of the temple of Apollo, which, supposing the temple faced NE, inwards to the hill, as did the house it replaced, not outwards as it is usually reconstructed (see Claridge [2014](#)), could mean the south end of the open space between the central and western wings of the Domitianic palace.

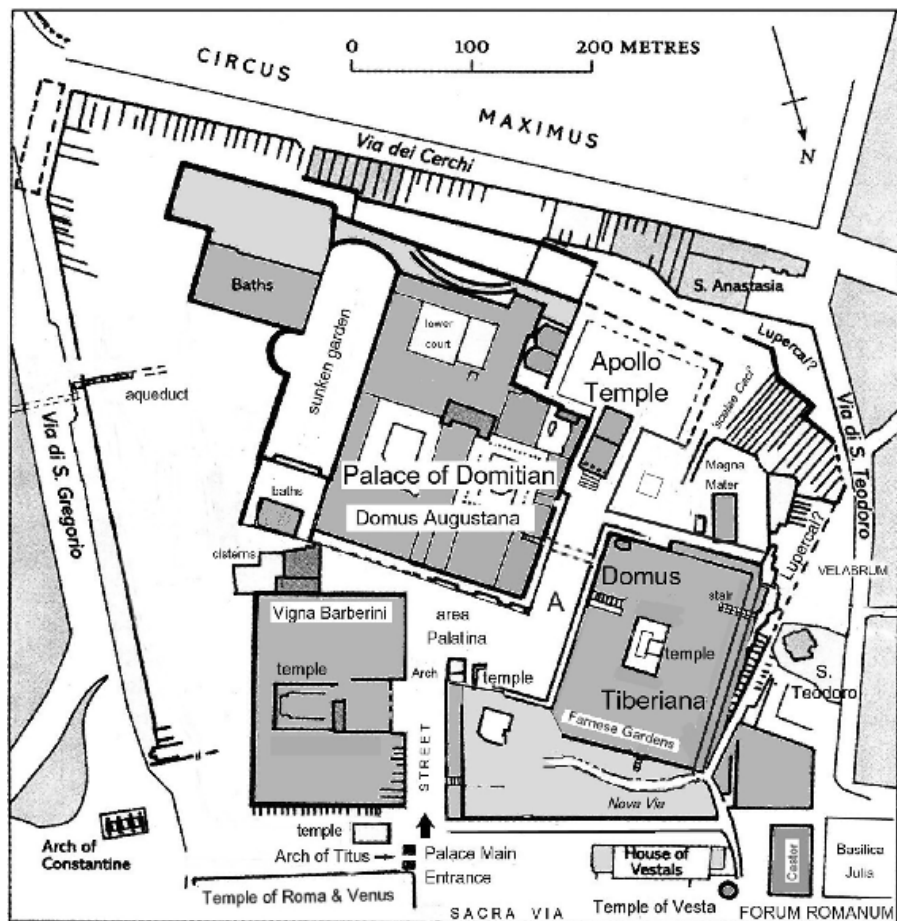


Figure 5.1 Plan of the Imperial palace on the Palatine, as of the period of Domitian (80–90 CE), with later additions. Drawing: A. Claridge.

The Development of the Palatine as the Imperial Palace

The initial stages in the process by which the whole Palatine hill (*Palatium*) was to become synonymous with the palace of the emperors are amply documented in the written record concerning the life of Augustus – who first set up house there around 40 BCE – but frustratingly elusive on the ground. Much of the problem is of our own making. In the late Renaissance (1560s), when the first detailed maps and reconstructions of the imperial palace were attempted, the massive substructures projecting from the south-western flank of the hill overlooking the Circus Maximus were seen as the palace's main facade. The *domus Augustana* (Augustus's house, named as such in the Regionary Catalogues of the fourth century CE) was identified as the eastern

half of the central block of the Palace of Domitian, entered through the lower court, with the Temple of Apollo located on axis beyond the second (upper) court. When the podium of the Temple of Apollo was actually discovered in 1865 it was not recognized as such, but mistaken for a republican temple of Jupiter and reconstructed to face outwards, approached by flight after flight of staircases leading up from the foot of the hill beside the circus. That there was no evidence for any such contact, at any point along the hill, and that the palace must also have had an entrance on the other side, from the direction of the Forum, was acknowledged even in the 1560s, but not considered particularly important, and the notion that the palace must have had a special relationship to the circus has persisted to the present day. Although the temple of Apollo was properly identified in 1906, it is still being reconstructed facing out from the hill, causing the theoretical position of the House of Augustus (which all the written sources agree was close by) to be relocated to embrace the temple from the rear (see Carandini 2017). However, viewed objectively, the layout of the Domitianic palace as a whole (as blocked out in Fig. 5.1) is clearly designed to face the other way, with its main entrance towards the valley of the Sacra Via and the Forum. There were evidently numerous staircases and ramps by which the palace could be reached on foot from every other direction but no access for wheeled vehicles except the street on the north (unnamed), which ran across from the Sacra Via on the saddle of high ground to the *area Palatina*, and from there into a long open space between the two wings of the palace (A on the plan) to the Temple of Apollo. If one simply turns the Temple of Apollo round, and moves the House of Augustus back to its old theoretical position, somewhere under the central wing of the palace of Domitian, thus placing the temple and house at the core, instead of on the fringe of the hill, the process described in the literary sources becomes perfectly sensible.

Sometime before 36 BCE Augustus (Octavian as he was then known) left a house close to the Roman Forum *supra scalae Anulariae* “above the ringmakers’ stairs” (location unknown, but probably on the Oppian) and moved to the summit of the Palatine, taking over a house once owned by the Hortensii family (*aedes Hortensianae*). His reasons for making the move and the Hortensian connection are not explained, perhaps both had to do with the proximity to the *auguratorium* and other monuments of Romulus (see above), but the house, a modestly sized and old-fashioned property, with tuff colonnades, no marble, not even mosaic floors, became his favorite, where he slept in the same bedroom whatever the season for the next 40 years (Suet. Aug. 72.1). In 36 BCE, as his fortunes soared, Octavian’s agents set about buying adjacent properties in order to create more public space. Almost immediately, one of the new acquisitions was struck by a thunderbolt, which the haruspices pronounced to be an omen sent by Apollo indicating that the god wished it for himself. Octavian ceded the stricken property to the state, and offered to pay for the temple himself, together with a monumental

precinct; the senate voted to buy him a new house in return, but he may have refused that honor, preferring to keep control of the project. The temple, built of solid white Italian marble, was dedicated in 28 BCE to both Apollo and his twin sister Diana, and housed also a cult statue of their mother Latona, while the precinct, known as the Porticus of the Danaids after its decoration in the form of a series of 50 bronze statues which stood between or in front of its columns, was completed two or three years later (Prop. 2.31.1–16). At the time, relatively small, elite domus, separated by narrow streets, filled much of the hilltop, those on the summit proper possibly laid out on some sort of grid, oriented north-east–south-west, if we can trust the matching alignments of the house over which the temple of Apollo was built on the south-west side and the early House of the Griffins on the north-east side, though the “Aula Isiaca,” part of a building of c. 40–30 BCE found under the floor of the north corner of the central wing of the Domitianic palace, is turned at a very different angle.

The podium of the Temple of Apollo is firmly identified, though reduced almost entirely to its concrete infill, and can be reconstructed to face north-east (see Claridge 2014); the porticus has mostly been lost, carried away down the hillside by landslides, but enough is preserved to show it was laid out down both sides and to the rear of the temple at its same ground level (47.6 meters above sea-level), projecting high above the slope on concrete vaulting. It will have measured about 91 meters × 80 meters, and had stairs leading up from below at the south corner; the roof of the concrete vaulting was specially designed to support the earth for a hanging garden (Pensabene and Gallochio 2013), which included a grove (*lucus*) sacred to Diana (Gros 2003), recommended by Ovid (*Ars Am.* 1.67) for lovers’ walks (comparing it to the other grand public porticoes of Pompey and Octavia, both on the Campus Martius, and Livia, on the Esquiline).

Individual visitors could climb up to the temple and its precinct from the Circus Maximus valley, by taking the stairs or the narrow ramp (“*scalae Caci*”) which ran up the outside of the precinct’s western flank, but large processions, sacrificial animals, horses and vehicles will have had to use the street on the north-east side of the hill. Only a short stretch of its Augustan paving is known, excavated by Boni near the Arch of Titus (at 28.30 meters above sea level) but it is apparently heading straight for the Temple of Apollo (Cassatella 1985, 105 and fig.3). In Augustus’s day the *area Palatina* could have been much larger, a place where vehicles would normally terminate, and the street ran through the middle of it. Whether it passed through one of the early Palatine gates (either before the *area Palatina*, or after) is not known, nor whether the Nova Via intersected with it at some point, but both possibilities are very likely.

The old Hortensian house burned and was refounded by Augustus in 3 CE at his own expense (Cass. Dio 55.12.4–5) and perhaps on a considerably larger

scale, declaring it state property, after which it took his name as the *domus Augustana*, a term which survived successive rebuildings down to late antiquity, and clearly applied by that time to the whole central wing of the Domitianic palace. (Confusingly, modern scholars still employ “*domus Augustana*” to denote only the eastern half of the central wing of the Domitianic palace, while its western half is dubbed the “*domus Flavia*,” a name for which there is no ancient authority.) Tiberius (reg. 14–37 CE) and Caligula (reg. 37–41 CE) each built their own *domus* somewhere on the north-west hilltop (under the platform of the west wing of the Domitianic palace). Tiberius’s probably faced that of Augustus, on the opposite side of the open space in front of the Temple of Apollo; Caligula’s (*domus Gai*) was reportedly so close to the Forum that it could be linked to the Temple of Castor but high enough for him to build a bridge across the Forum valley to connect it to the precinct of Jupiter on the Capitoline, where he intended to set up another house (Suet. *Cal.* 22). The bridge, like the name of his house, may have been abolished after his *damnatio* in 37 CE, for we do not hear of it again. Tiberius’s name, on the other hand, remained in place, still describing a part of the palace, presumably all or part of the west wing, in the Regionary Catalogues (*domus Augustana et Tiberiana*). A recent excavation in the center of the platform of the west wing (Tomei 2011) indicates another phase of works under Claudius (reg. 41–54 CE) and Nero (reg. 54–68), who began to restructure the *domus Augustana* as well (apparently intending to connect it with imperial property on the Oppian), only for the great fire of 64 CE to devastate everything (sparing only the Temple of Apollo).

After the fire Nero set about extending the Palatine palace to the Oppian in earnest, where he built a vast new “golden” house, the *domus Aurea* (Ball 2003; Champlin 2003, 178–209), the lower floor of which survives to ceiling height (having been reused as part of the platform of the Baths of Trajan), consisting almost entirely of dining rooms, with a suite of baths attached. Nero replanned the valley of the Sacra Via at the same time, including the Sacra Via itself (see Map 7), laying out a new grid from the Regia to the saddle of high ground between the two hills, where the *vestibulum* or forecourt of his new house was situated, containing a colossal bronze statue of Sol, 120 Roman feet (35.5 meters) high (Plin. *HN* 34.45; Suet. *Nero* 31) that, given its position, will have risen clear of all the surrounding hills. He also took over much of the bottom of the Colosseum valley below the house, between the Oppian and the tip of the Caelian hill, filling it with porticoes, gardens, a wild animal park, and a large artificial lake. The project, although intended for public hospitality – the staging of public banquets – on a vast scale, was one of the many excesses which contributed to Nero’s suicide. A *domus* on the hill was fine, even the park would be normal there, but the expropriation of such a large area of the lower city evidently was not.

In the 70s CE Nero’s successors, Vespasian, Titus, and Domitian, although

they may have lived in the Domus Aurea (because the Palatine palace was not yet habitable), removed the park from the valley and used the land for the Colosseum (*amphitheatrum Flavium*) and its four gladiatorial training schools; Titus rebuilt the baths and opened them to the public. From 80 CE to 90 Domitian took the Palatine palace in hand, rebuilding every part of it to a new common floor level of c. 49 meters above sea-level. He reconstructed the Augustan core (see [Figure 14.3](#)), to cover an area of 160 × 160 meters, with its front door beside the Temple of Apollo, and installed a new platform on the north-western hilltop, 100 × 160 meters, retaining a large rectangular pool at its center (which the latest excavation has shown dates from the period of Claudius, perhaps even Tiberius). The rest of the plan is obscured by the Farnese Gardens, but appears to have been laid out to a regular grid, with a large building around the pool and other rectangular sectors. Staircases rose up through the substructures from the *Velabrum* and from the Forum, at the north corner; there was presumably at least one entrance on the Palatine side, but none has yet been located. A new platform of almost equivalent size (100 × 150 meters) was constructed to the same floor level on the east side of the hill (the Vigna Barberini), aligned with the street grid that Nero had imposed on the valley of the Sacra Via after the fire of 64. The main palace entrance was remodeled to suit, with a new street replacing the earlier Augustan route, laid out at right angles to the new Sacra Via, and leading to a new palace gate, marked by a monumental arch. A temple was built (or rebuilt) in the *area Palatina*, beside the palace gate, probably for Jupiter Victor. Excavations on the top of the eastern platform indicate that in its first phase it carried only gardens, with a built-in watering system, ringed by porticoes (a large temple in the center, facing the palace entrance, dates from the Severan period). Domitian also added a long sunken garden to the south, two stories deep, in the shape of a racetrack, along the flank of the central wing, with a large bath-building on the far side, and he rebuilt the high-level platform which carried the precinct of the Temple of Apollo, presumably with its grove (landslides have destroyed most of it, together with most of its Augustan predecessor).

The long open space in front of the Temple of Apollo, forming the vestibule between the two main wings of the palace, now measured some 30 meters wide and 140 meters in length, and was probably lined with porticoes above ground. Its resemblance to a civic forum is strong and may have been intentional: it is the same size as the forum of Pompeii and actually rather larger than the new Forum Transitorium that Domitian built in the inner Forum valley, taking over a street (*Argiletum*) between the Forum of Augustus and Vespasian's Temple of Peace (see Map 7). A wide tunnel was constructed beneath the long space making it possible to cross from one wing of the palace to the other undercover: a stair led down into it from the suite of council rooms on north-east side of the *domus Augustana*, while at its western end the tunnel joined a long subterranean corridor that led in one direction to the Temple of Magna Mater at the western corner of the hill and in the other

to the palace entrance.

Huge quantities of aqueduct water were delivered to the east side of the hill, by a branch of the *aqua Claudia*, which Nero had already led as far as the tip of the Caelian, and which Domitian extended to the Palatine, primarily to supply the baths, fountains, lakes and gardens which made up much of the palace on the hilltop but no doubt distributed also to the population on the lower terraces below. While the palace on top was home to the emperors, it was also the center of the imperial system of government, staffed by an army of imperial slaves and freedmen who administered the empire on the emperors' behalf, many of whom were presumably accommodated on site. Houses of imperial freedmen on the terraces immediately below the palace overlooking the Circus Maximus are well-attested in the sources from the days of Augustus onwards (e.g. Suet. *Aug.* 45.1; *Cal.* 18.3), in addition to which there were the palace basements (numerous parts of older phases survive under the later palace, apparently kept accessible, connected by tunnels) and the multistorey substructures which underpinned the outward extensions of the platforms. The latter were designed to be usable and could have served multiple functions as slave quarters, storage and workshop space (see Ghedini 2003).

Trajan and Hadrian added a series of extensions to the north-eastern end of the western platform and in the area between that and the palace entrance, bringing the palace virtually into contact with the Forum, Temple of Vesta and the House of the Vestals (which was rebuilt by Trajan on a grand scale around 113 CE). At the top of the Sacra Via, on the saddle between the Palatine and the Oppian, where Nero's colossal statue had continued to stand, Hadrian built the great Temple of Venus and Roma, just outside the palace entrance, moving the statue down beside the Colosseum. Hadrian also restructured much of the south-west side of the central wing and the sunken garden, which faced the newly rebuilt and greatly heightened Circus Maximus (started by Domitian and finished by Trajan in 103 CE), perhaps installing a high-level bridge between the two buildings, as the top of the circus seating rose to the same level as the sunken garden and lower more secluded dining court of the palace). Underfloor heating in the main palace banqueting hall dates from the time of Hadrian, who is also recorded restoring the *auguratorium* in 138 CE, at his own expense (*CIL* 6.976).

A final major phase of development was instituted by the Severan emperors (190–250 CE), who restored the central wing, built a small temple of unknown dedication in the center of the western wing (where the pool had been), remodeled the center of the eastern wing to accommodate a large temple (probably dedicated to another Jupiter), added an extra platform beyond the baths at the southern corner of the hill, on which they extended the existing baths, with an increased supply of aqueduct water, and laid out more garden terraces. The pace of change then dropped off dramatically, and

although the palace continued to be used, and repairs and renewals continued to be made at least until the early sixth century CE (at the time of the Ostrogothic emperors Theodoric and Athalaric), it was largely abandoned by the seventh century.

The *Horti*

In the singular *hortus* simply means a kitchen garden, which ancient Rome had in abundance throughout its history, attached to every kind of property in every part of the city and beyond (the Pincian hill was known as *collis Hortulorum*, the hill of little gardens). From the second century BCE, a distinct category of urban garden property begins to be referred to as *horti* in the plural, owned by the elite and used for leisure (*otium*) among family and close friends, as distinct from the life of public business (*negotium*) and formal hospitality which centered on the main town house, the *domus* (see Platts, [Chapter 14i](#) in this volume). Those owned by Scipio Africanus in 163 BCE must have been on high ground, as they contained an *auguraculum*, probably that on the Mons Latialis (the tip of the Quirinal hill). Pompey the Great apparently had two, called upper and lower (*superiori* and *inferiori*), the upper perhaps on the Quirinal, previously owned by Scipio, the lower on the plain of the Campus Martius, at least a part of which he probably used for the construction of the grand public theatre and porticus that he built in 55 BCE, where he may also have staged public feasts (D'Arms [1998](#), 36). Caesar's *horti* on the plain of Transtiberim, where he entertained the whole Roman people to lunch on two occasions following his Spanish triumph in 45 BCE, were donated to the Roman people in his will, together with all their statues and paintings (D'Arms [1998](#), 40). Marcus Agrippa did the same with his *horti* on the Campus Martius, with Augustus's blessing (Cass. Dio 54.29.4). By the end of the first century BCE, *horti* were being developed on the eastern hills (by then amply supplied with aqueduct water), just outside the Republican Walls, where they could house family tombs as well as altars and temples for favored family gods. Among the first were the *horti* of Maecenas, friend of Augustus and patron of Virgil. These were located on the eastern side of the Oppian, built across the city wall, and were noted for their luxury, with an auditorium and a belvedere tower (from which Nero was later to observe the progress of the great fire in 64 CE). The larger examples were endowed with private baths, libraries, auditoria, and luxuriously appointed pavilions, used for private dining, theatrical, musical, philosophical, and literary performances, gaming and other otiose pastimes. The owners were not only the emperor and members of the imperial family but wealthy people of all ranks, including freedmen and freedwomen and imperial slaves, who would use the property as their main residence (having no need for a *domus* of their own). From the second century CE a second, outer ring of *horti* developed, as

App Cae Oppidum Esq Quirinalis Palatium Caelia Ave. Aventina Transtiberim vall. hill hill vall. hill Vimini Martius Campus Martius hill Max. hill hill plain/

	(East hill)			(West hill)			(East hill)			(West hill)					
vici	10	7	12	8	15	17	15	34	35	20	19	17	17	78	304
insulae	250	260	275	275	385	340	380	348	278	264	260	248	248	443	310
domus	120	127	60	88	180	146	120	130	140	89	89	113	150	150	702
horrea	16	27	17	18	26	18	25	18	25	48	16	27	35	22	338
balnea	86	85	80	75	75	75	75	35	63	43	15	63	64	86	920
lacus	87	65	65	76	73	73	76	120	120	89	20	81	88	180	123
pistrina	20	15	16	15	15	16	15	20	20	20	16	20	20	23	251
peristyles	2,200	2,200	2,350	3,000	5,600	5,700	1,500	3,062	5,000	1,600	1,500	2,000	3,000	3,000	
RF/km	3.61	3.61	3.65	3.8	4.6	4.6	3.4	3.1	9.6	3.4	3.4	3.6	5.1	9.7	

Notes:

None of the figures is to be trusted, but they are broadly credible.

Shops (*tabernae*) were not listed separately since they formed part of the other main building types (*insulae*, *domus*, *horrea*, *balnea*).

Seven regions are predominantly low-lying (Tiber plain and valleys), seven predominantly on hills.

Public bakeries were very evenly distributed c. 20 per region, though proportionately fewer on the hills.

Public fountains (*lacus*) were more frequent in the forums (VIII) and western Campus Martius (IX) compared with other regions on the left bank.

Regions IX (western Campus Martius) and XIV (the Transtiberim) encompassed twice the area of the others.

The phenomenon of hilltop and greater Rome endured well into the fourth century CE, but then began to unwind, hit first by Constantine's foundation of a rival Rome at Constantinople and then by a rapidly declining population and the many other changes to the wider Roman world. In the fifth and sixth century CE the local aristocracy, reduced in numbers, started to move back down off the hills to the low ground, asserting their power and authority by building new houses in, on and around the Roman and imperial fora, and other major public spaces, even taking over public streets. Their old properties on the hilltops within the walls, when not simply abandoned, were supplanted by monasteries and monastic farms, shepherds and their sheep, a situation which persisted throughout the long middle ages until the ecclesiastical elite of Renaissance Rome, inspired by the study of classical antiquity to a revival of the aqueduct system of water supply, started to lay claim to the hills once again.

Guide to Further Reading

For the geology of Rome, see Funicello *et al.* 1995 (also available online); Heiken, Funicello and De Rita 2005 offers an authoritative guide to the visible geology of the hills, though the archaeological and historical content is less reliable. For the geomorphology, see Ammerman 1990, 2004, 2008, 2009, and 2013.

For Bronze Age and Iron Age Rome Fulminante 2013 gathers together all the available archaeological evidence, but does so within the conventional historical model of its development as a series of small villages on the hilltops and on the rather shaky understanding that early burials on the low ground are evidence of non-habitation. Hopkins 2016 is a new and well-illustrated discussion of the development of temple buildings in Rome in the sixth and fifth centuries BCE incorporating evidence from the latest excavations.

For later periods, most of the individual sites mentioned here can be followed up in the two archaeological guides to Rome, Claridge 2010 and Coarelli 2007, which also fill in much further detail concerning the development of the various parts of the city, its plains, valleys and hills. General studies of the topography of the Caelian hill (Colini 1944) and Aventine (Merlin 1906) have yet to be updated; for the Quirinal, in addition to Coarelli 2014, Santangelo 1941 remains valuable; for the Palatine, see also Cecamore 2002. The complicated structural history of the central wing of the Domitianic palace on the Palatine has recently been the focus of much new research, usefully summarized in English by Wulf-Rheidt 2015. Ziolkowski 2004 is a salutary exposition on the convoluted historical topography of the Sacra Via.

For the phenomenon of the luxury *horti*, the article by Purcell 2007 and those in the papers from a conference held in Rome in 1998, of which several are in English (Wallace-Hadrill, D'Arms, Boatwright) are good places to start. Häuber 2014 provides a detailed account of the archaeological evidence for the *horti* of Maecenas within a wider study of the topography of the Oppian (but see also Wiseman 2016). Hartswick 2004 has attempted to do the same for the *horti* of Sallust (in the valley between the Quirinal and Pincian hills). Frass 2006 provides a useful compendium of textual references to *horti* in Rome, of all kinds. For the changing landscapes of the late antique and early medieval city, see Krautheimer 1980.

The *Atlas of Ancient Rome*, edited by Andrea Carandini (2017) has employed the latest digital technology to map the archaeology of all periods from the eighth century BCE to the sixth century CE in great detail, organized spatially and temporally within the traditional frameworks of historical topography. The Iron Age city is portrayed (highly controversially) as a hilltop city of Romulus and the kings; the Republican city (as defined by the presumed circuit of the fourth-century "Servian" Walls) is subdivided according to the presumed boundaries of the four "Servian" regions, and the imperial city is limited to the area within the Aurelian walls, subdivided according to the presumed boundaries of the 14 Augustan regions of the Regionary

Catalogues. All archaeological remains are extensively reconstructed, sometimes entirely invented, and given dates and ancient names (or pseudo-ancient names) in accordance with the written sources and Carandini's often idiosyncratic interpretations of them. As a work of synthesis and reference it is a valuable resource but must be used with caution.

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PART III

THE PEOPLE

CHAPTER SIX

The Population

Elio Lo Cascio

In one of the *Variae* he wrote as the praetorian prefect of the Gothic kings, in the thirties of the sixth century CE, Cassiodorus pointed out how big the population of the city of Rome had been in the past, as evidenced still in his time by the extent of the circuit of the wall, by the spaciousness of the buildings and the places of entertainment, by the admirable grandiosity of the baths and by the number of water-mills (Cassiod. *Var.* 11.39). The period of time to which Cassiodorus refers is likely to be the late third and fourth century CE, following the construction of the mills powered by the aqueducts (since the Severan age) and of the Aurelian wall. And it is clear from what he says that the population had, by his own time, drastically shrunk. This passage marks the end or the lowest point of a parabola, which by the last century of the Republic and the first two centuries of the empire saw the city of Rome reaching a level of population in the range of 800,000–1,200,000, unsurpassed in the Western World until the beginning of the nineteenth century with London. Cassiodorus's letter does not offer a direct indication of Rome's population at his time, but it supplies a valuable, though indirect, clue. We learn that the tax in gold that used to be paid by the province of Bruttii in Southern Italy (corresponding to modern Calabria) to finance the provision of pork for Rome's consumption was to be reduced from 1,200 to 1,000 gold *solidi*, that is, a trifling quantity, if compared to the number of *solidi* provided by this same contribution in the fourth and fifth century CE. From this figure we deduce that by Cassiodorus's time the population of Rome amounted to just a few tens of thousands.

Cassiodorus's letter is an effective illustration of the problems and difficulties confronting anybody who tries to arrive at a quantitative estimate of the population of Rome in the different periods of its history, starting from indirect indications which usually pertain, moreover, only to a section of the total population.

Counting the inhabitants of Rome: The methodological problem

At first sight it would seem futile to try to arrive at a precise quantitative

estimate of the population of Rome, in the absence of proper ancient statistics: after all a figure does not tell us so much by itself. And certainly if this figure is the result of mere speculation or is just an educated guess based on alleged plausibility or at best on comparative material, as is often the case with the demography of the Roman world, it may even prove to be dangerous, since it gives a wholly unjustified impression of scientific precision where there is none. On the other hand, it seems undeniable that in order to understand properly the main features of the economic, social, cultural, and religious life of the metropolis and to evaluate its impact on the Mediterranean empire of Rome and its internal organization, it is crucially important to establish not only what was the composition of its population, but, prior to that, whether this population at its apogee was 400,000 or 800,000 or 1,200,000 and how such an order of magnitude compares not only with the population of the other big cities of the Mediterranean world, but above all with the population of Rome's hinterland and more generally with the population of Italy: it would be equally important to establish whether the population of Rome was one-fourth, one-eighth, or one-twelfth of the inhabitants of Italy. Still, contrasting views have been recently expressed on the size of the population of the peninsula, opposing the so called "low counters" to the so called "high counters" (see now, e.g., Launaro 2011; de Ligt 2012; Hin 2013), and the range of the proposed estimates is even wider than that of the estimates of Rome. It must be underlined, however, that both in the case of the population of Italy and in the case of the population of Rome there is some solid ancient evidence on which to found the estimates. The controversy is first of all on the reliability of the figures transmitted by the sources (which are by no means few), compounded by the frequently observed phenomenon that figures are even more easily affected by corruption than words in the process of transmission, and secondly, on the philological interpretation of this evidence, since it is not always uncontroversial as to what section of the population the figures refer.

This appears to be a major problem. The population of Rome was composed of free persons and slaves, with free persons including free-born and freedmen of citizen status and foreigners (*peregrini*). Moreover, it has been argued, as we will see, that many, if not most, of the inhabitants of Rome were only temporary residents. Are we in a position to estimate the size of these different sectors of the population at some point in time? The most reliable data we possess refer to the beneficiaries of the corn-dole or of the *congiaria* (the money distributions by the emperor to the *plebs urbana* on particular occasions), who constituted perhaps a minority of the population of Rome. These figures (transmitted by Suetonius, the *Res gestae divi Augusti*, and Cassius Dio) relate to the time of Caesar, of Augustus, and of Septimius Severus. Since the seminal work by Beloch at the end of the nineteenth century (Beloch 1886), scholars have tried to exploit these figures with varying degrees of ingenuity, seeking to evaluate the number of the other

inhabitants who, by reason of status, sex or age were excluded from the distributions. However, opinions diverge on how to calculate this additional number.

Free male adult citizens, perhaps (at least from Augustus onwards) free born, permanently resident in Rome were certainly beneficiaries of the corn-dole. Among the beneficiaries of the *congiaria* there were sometimes also younger males or even children below ten (Suet. *Aug.* 41.2). The first problem, therefore, is how to calculate the number of resident women and children of citizen status; the second is how to calculate the numbers of *peregrini* and slaves. As far as the first problem is concerned, scholars have, reasonably enough, adopted the data provided by model life tables and model stable populations: mathematical models built by demographers on large sets of empirical data referring to recent or contemporary populations, whose immediate aim is to enable estimates of the demographic variables for all the populations for which we have incomplete or inaccurate records of vital statistics. Furthermore, scholars have also had to make an assumption on what the sex ratio would have been in Rome. In order to select a model population which compares to the citizen population they have also had to make several other assumptions: they have had to assume that the population was stable, that is, with a constant birth-rate and death-rate and therefore with a steady rate of increase or decrease and a constant age distribution, or at least that it was approaching stability; they have had to assume that this population experienced a specific and fixed life expectancy at birth; they have had to assume that this population was “closed,” that is, that it did not increase by immigration and did not decrease by emigration. All these assumptions, which are individually questionable, obviously have a strong impact on the calculation and it is perfectly understandable, therefore, that the results can widely diverge.

Even more problematic is to evaluate the number of foreigners and of slaves. As to the latter it has been proposed to use a “bottom-up” estimate of the putative number of servants an individual family belonging to the elite had on average (Scheidel 2005). But it is apparent that this estimate is vulnerable to error, depending on assumptions about the size of the elite and what the average number of servants could be. As far as the number of foreigners is concerned, there seems to be no possibility whatsoever to give even an educated guess (even if some suggestion on the percentage of temporary residents in the whole population can come from analysis of osteological evidence in cemeteries close to Rome (Hin 2013, 218–20, and references therein)).

In order to try to give an evaluation of the total population of Rome it is therefore necessary to look at other types of evidence. The extension of built space in the different phases of the history of the metropolis can offer some indications, provided that we are able to measure it and to establish a plausible

value of population density: and it is not by chance that this method has been generally adopted, since Beloch, to estimate the population of the other urban centers of Roman Italy and of the empire, looking mainly at the extension of space surrounded by city walls. There are problems, however: the area inside the wall can include empty spaces, or the built area spread beyond the circuit of the wall, as happened in Rome with the Servian wall very early in the mid-Republic. At the end of the Republic the limit of the inhabited space was defined by the notion of *continentia aedificia*, the area seamlessly built, a notion that we find attested for the first time in the *Tabula Heracleensis*, an inscription containing rulings on the internal life of Rome and Roman towns in Italy, dated to the years of Caesar's dictatorship (*Roman Statutes* 24). On the other hand we know that the extension of the inhabited space during the empire was larger than that enclosed within Aurelian's wall. And beyond the *continentia aedificia* there was the *suburbium*, a rural area, but very densely populated. According to Dionysius of Halicarnassus, nobody would have been able to say, in his time (the Augustan age), where the city ended and where the countryside began (Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 4.13.3–4). As to population density, it is certain that Rome was overcrowded and that multistorey *insula*-type buildings were the rule, as emerges from the scanty archaeological evidence, but in particular from some peculiar documents of the fourth century, the so-called Regionaries (see Flower, [Chapter 1ii](#) in this volume), which give a numerical account of the *insulae* and the *domus* in the individual *Regiones* of Rome, the administrative subdivisions of the city created by Augustus. But even taking this for granted, the range of densities proposed by looking also at the comparative material is wide, from 100 per hectare to 800 or even more per hectare.

On the other hand the data in the Regionaries themselves seem to suggest that the city was very densely populated indeed: in their various versions they give slightly different figures for the total number of the *insulae* in the fourteen regions, amounting to c. 44,000–46,000, and slightly different figures for their number in the individual regions, sometimes incredibly high, given the extension of the regions themselves (like in the *Regio VIII Forum Romanum*, where there are 3,480, or in the *Regio X Palatium*, where there are 2,742 or 2,643). The number of *domus* in the whole city is, on the other hand, much lower, c. 1700–1800: it is clear that the term *insula* as used in the Regionaries cannot indicate, by itself, an independent multistorey apartment block, like the ones we find archaeologically attested to in Rome and, better, in Ostia. Attempting to render the range 44,000–46,000 credible, several interpretations have been offered for the meaning of the term in these documents, whereas some have denied any value whatsoever to this intractable evidence. However, it seems clear, first, that the meaning of *insula* in the Regionaries must be in one way or another connected with the sense of apartment block, and, second, that, even if we do not understand properly the aim of these strange writings, the documents on which they were based were cadastral

documents officially produced to give an account of the parcels of property in which the territory of the fourteen regions was progressively divided and of the *aedificia* built over them, which belonged to the owners of the parcels of land (since the owner of the land was, according to Roman law, the owner also of what was built over it). The 44,000 or 46,000 were therefore parcels of property (perhaps including the *insulae publicae*, the public buildings) into which the soil of Rome was divided (Lo Cascio 1997, 2000; Coarelli 1997. For a different opinion on the nature of the documents and on the meaning of *insula*, see Dubouloz 2011, 537–69).

Another approach to the calculation of the whole population of Rome is offered by the sparse data we possess on the consumption of grain in the city, and later on the consumption of pork in the fourth and fifth century. The biographer of the Emperor Septimius Severus twice alludes to the *septem annorum canon* (SHA Sev. 8.5; 23.2), the reserve of grain coming as tax or rent from the imperial properties over seven years, left by the emperor to the population of Rome. According to the biographer, the daily quantity of grain to be put at the population's disposal would have been 75,000 modii, which could be enough to feed 650,000–700,000 people, which must have constituted the majority of the population of the city at that time. Two laws of the Theodosian Code (*Cod. Theod.* 14.4.4, of 367 CE, and 14.4.10, of 419 CE) and a Novella of Valentinianus III (*Nov. Val.* 36.1–2, of 452 CE) give different figures concerning: the total quantity of pork coming to Rome as the specific contribution of some regions of Central and Southern Italy (the so called *canon suarius*); the quantity of pork distributed to the beneficiaries of this dole over the course of five months (plausibly the winter months); the quantity given every month to a single beneficiary. Again different interpretations of the individual pieces of evidence have been offered: but in any case the total amount of the *canon suarius* gives a clear indication of the consumption of pork at Rome and allows us to estimate an order of magnitude of the population of the city during the fourth and fifth century CE (Lo Cascio 1997, 63–76 and 2013).

Another clue to the order of magnitude of the population of Rome in the middle and late Republic, and of its rapid growth, has been thought to be the increasing quantity of water supplied through aqueducts built after the *aqua Appia*, at the end of the fourth century BCE. However, it is difficult to give a truly quantitative dimension to this growth. Moreover, it seems illegitimate to consider rather mechanically the increase in the supply of water as a simple reflection of population growth. The inhabitants of imperial Rome, especially after the interventions of Agrippa and the Emperor Claudius (see Evans, Chapter 11 in this volume), had at their disposal individually a quantity of water much higher than the inhabitants of early modern and even contemporary European towns: therefore an evaluation of the urban population based on the flow of water reaching Rome, in comparison with

other preindustrial urban centers, tends to overestimate it.

Finally, an indication of the size of the population of Rome may be drawn from the number of people who could attend the shows in the theatre, the amphitheatre, the circus. Again, this kind of information is of limited value, since we do not know the proportion of the inhabitants of Rome attending individual events, nor how many people came from outside the Urbs. Other snippets of evidence have been used ingeniously to draw some numerical information. Thus, the episode of the banquet offered by Caesar to the population of Rome after his four triumphs of 46 BCE and after the Hispanic triumph of 45 BCE, on 22,000 *triclinia*, seems to suggest a reliable figure (D'Arms 1998 and references therein). Since each *triclinium* could accommodate nine people, the total number of beneficiaries – adult men – would be around 200,000, which one may assume to be the total number of beneficiaries of the *frumentationes* (but the figure surely admits some younger citizens, if, as we shall see, the number of recipients of the dole was drastically reduced by Caesar to 150,000).

In the end it seems that a general consensus has been reached that the population was somewhere in the range of 800,000 to 1,200,000 in the first two centuries of empire, prior to the Antonine plague; the lower estimates proposed by some scholars (most recently by Storey 1997) have been largely rejected. The whole of our evidence seems to give an indication, also very broadly, of how the size of Rome's population changed over time between the "Servian" age and the Gothic age, and what were the determinants of this change.

The Dynamics of the Population: Immigration and Natural Reproduction

The considerable increase in the population of Rome, which was already substantial when the so-called "Servian" wall was built in the fourth century BCE, is obviously a direct outcome of conquest and empire. The key determinant of population growth was certainly immigration. The urban drift was enhanced by the growth of public and private wealth, especially during the second century BCE. Some passages in Livy are particularly significant in this respect, since they reveal the extent of the migratory movement from the Latin colonies towards Rome. In 187 BCE and again in 177 BCE some Latin colonies sent embassies to Rome to complain that they were losing their manpower, so that it would become impossible for them in the future to meet their obligation to provide the expected quota of soldiers to the armies of Rome (Livy 39.3.4–6, 41.8.6–12, cf. 41.9.9–12, 42.10.1–3; see Laffi 2001, 44–84; Broadhead 2008). But the migratory movement from the various

regions of the Italian peninsula did not stop and was even boosted by the introduction of the corn-dole, with the *lex Sempronia frumentaria* of 123 BCE. Later on, migrants of free status came from the Mediterranean areas under Roman rule, and the forced migration of slaves has to be added to the calculation.

Yet until the end of the Republic we have no way of giving a quantitative estimate of the increase of population due to immigration. The first reliable estimates are derivable from our sources addressing the cost to the state of the corn-dole, from which it is possible to calculate roughly the number of beneficiaries, and by indications of the number of the beneficiaries themselves. Two passages in Plutarch's *Lives* referring to a measure promoted by Cato in 62 BCE, which presumably expanded the number of the recipients, give an indication of the additional cost to the state of this measure (Plut. *Cat. Min.* 26.1; *Caes.* 8.6; see Lo Cascio 2000, 34–35). From this it is possible to calculate the number of the recipients at 200,000 at the very least. More precise data are offered by Suetonius in his biography of Caesar (Suet. *Iul.* 41.3–42.1). During his dictatorship he introduced a new criterion for registering at the census the citizens permanently resident in Rome. This new procedure involved the owners of the *insulae*, who were obliged to provide a statement (a *professio*) of their property and of the persons who lived there. Recent migrants, who had temporary accommodation in the city, would not have been registered as permanent residents and therefore would have no right to the dole. In this way, according to Suetonius, Caesar reduced the number of the beneficiaries from 320,000 to 150,000. A substantial number of the recent migrants excluded from the benefit were settled in the new colonies founded by Caesar in the provinces, others would have gone back to their place of origin. Many, however, would have remained in Rome in temporary accommodation. In this way, a distinction between permanent residents and temporary or precarious migrants would have emerged.

This distinction was strengthened by Augustus. In [chapter 15](#) of his *Res gestae* Augustus boasted that he had distributed *congiaria* several times to a changing number of beneficiaries, 250,000, 200,000, and on one occasion 320,000. The most economical explanation of this range of beneficiaries is that the biggest figure refers to a *congiarium* extended to the children below ten, the intermediate to the males over ten, and the smallest figure to the adult males over seventeen, the beneficiaries of the corn-dole, as he expressly says referring to the *congiarium* of 2 BCE. But Cassius Dio gives us another supplementary piece of information: in this year Augustus “closed” the *plebs frumentaria* (Cass. Dio 55.10.1 Xiphilinus). From then on, for someone to be admitted to the group of beneficiaries, it would have been necessary for someone else to be excluded, either because he had left the city or because he had died. In any case, the latter's place would have been taken by one of his descendants. The privilege became therefore hereditary, as is clearly stated by

the biographer of the emperor Aurelian (SHA *Aurel.* 35.1), and by a law of the Theodosian Code (14.17.5). One consequence of this must have been that freedmen would have progressively disappeared, to the extent that their sons were *ingenui* (i.e. freeborn). This closing of the *plebs frumentaria* effectively resulted in the division of the citizen inhabitants of Rome into two groups.

This bipartition raises two connected problems. What was the proportion of temporary migrants in comparison with the permanent residents? Secondly, is the growth of the population of Rome after Caesar and Augustus predominantly due still to immigration or also, to some extent, to natural increase? It has been authoritatively maintained that, along the whole history of the Urbs, the majority of its population would have been temporary residents (Purcell 1994; 1996; 1999) and therefore the huge number of its inhabitants would have been the result of a massive and very fast turnover due to the continuous influx of new immigrants. The notion of a very fast turnover of population, on the other hand, is perfectly consistent with another one: the notion of a strong imbalance between a very high death-rate, due to the appalling health conditions, and a much lower birth-rate. The population of Rome, like the population of the preindustrial metropolises, for example early modern London, would thus have been incapable of reproducing itself. It has even been maintained (by Jongman 1990 and 2003, by Morley 1996, and by Scheidel 2003) that this imbalance would have been so strong that the natural decrease of the population of Rome would have offset, through migratory movement towards Rome, the natural increase of the population of the whole Italian peninsula.

The model of the so-called “urban graveyard effect” has been applied to Rome on the basis of the comparative evidence, and many ancient historians have found a confirmation of its effectiveness in the gloomy picture of overcrowding, promiscuity, and virtually non-existent hygiene which has been built by some scholars (notably Scobie 1986) on the basis of the shocking descriptions of Martial and Juvenal, or of other anecdotal evidence (e.g. in Suet. *Vesp.* 5.4, cf. Cass. Dio 65 (66). 1.2), but disregarding the much more positive evidence on the living conditions of the urban population offered by, for example, Vitruvius (2.8.17). Truly, as has been acutely observed (by Laurence 1997), one can discover a clear ideological stance behind this negative description that can be traced back to some contemporary theoreticians of urban planning like Lewis Mumford (Mumford 1961). Two kinds of objections can be raised against the application to Rome of the model of the “urban graveyard effect.” First, the model itself, or at least its overall validity, has been questioned. Thus, it has been held that the theory of the urban graveyard effect or urban natural decrease reverses the causal relationship between surplus of deaths and immigration: immigration itself explains this imbalance, especially when we consider that migrants experience more precarious living conditions than stable residents and therefore marry

and have children less easily than them (Sharlin 1978; 1981). Moreover, there are well documented cases of urban centers of early modern Europe (among them Rome itself in the seventeenth century) for which the theory is not supported by the evidence (van der Woude 1982; for early modern Rome Lo Cascio 2001a). Secondly, in assuming the applicability to ancient Rome of the theory, one neglects the features of imperial Rome that make it probable that the health conditions, or more generally the living conditions, of the urban plebs were by far better than in the big cities of early modern Europe. An effective drainage system went back to the very early history of the city, and the sewers prevented the unhealthy stagnation of water. One forgets that, even accepting the most conservative estimates drawn from Frontinus (*Aq.*; Bruun 1997), the quantity of water available to the individual inhabitant of the city, distributed through the *lacus* (reservoirs) and the *salientes* (fountains) was unparalleled in other preindustrial cities. To this water one has to add the water that went to other public facilities and above all to the public baths, open to the general public and free or almost free. Another estimate, also drawn from Frontinus's work, posits the whole amount of water conducted to Rome at 1,000 liters per head per day, double the quantity available to the inhabitant of Rome even today. Nor does it appear that malaria, which by itself or in interaction with other diseases would have been responsible for a very high percentage of deaths (Sallares 2002; Scheidel 2003), prevented the natural increase of the stable population of Rome. The importance of malaria must not have been substantial, to judge from the meager evidence we possess of its presence in Rome itself (Lo Cascio 2001b), even if it can explain the peculiar seasonality of deaths revealed by a particular class of funerary inscriptions, Christian epitaphs, which report the day and month of death (Shaw 1996).

Moreover, the privileged part of the population could rely on the corn-dole (five modii a month to every beneficiary, a quantity which could be enough to satisfy the needs of two people), replaced in the third century CE by the daily distribution of bread, and complemented, again from the third century, by the distribution of olive oil and pork. That made the living standard of this part of the *plebs urbana* decidedly higher than the living standard of the mass of the population of early modern European urban centers, by freeing resources not only for other food consumption, but also for consumption other than food, therefore increasing the demand for goods produced in Rome itself.

In conclusion one can contend that the permanent population of Rome was able in general to reproduce itself (see Lo Cascio 2006) and therefore was sometimes modestly increasing, and sometimes stationary. This can be deduced also from the fact that at the time of Caesar, and then permanently after the establishment of a fixed number of beneficiaries under Augustus, a criterion was introduced to fill the vacancies. We do not know the details of the system in force at Rome, but we know those of a corn-dole established

during the third century CE in the Egyptian town of Oxyrhynchus, modelled on the dole in Rome. This criterion, at Oxyrhynchus as in Rome, was the lot. However, if the population was not reproducing itself vacant places would be available. Only if the population was stationary or increasing would the lot have been necessary, in the first case to establish an order of priority in being registered, in the second to select the beneficiaries. We know, however, that there was another system to fill the vacancies. Some juridical sources, mainly of the Severan age, as well as some literary sources, refer to the purchase of the right to receive the dole (Virlouvet 1995, 205–16). The purchase of the right obviously implies that on occasion the number of the people who had lost the right to the dole (mainly the dead) was higher than the number of potential beneficiaries. We can deduce that when vacancies were filled through the sale of the right, the *plebs frumentaria* was failing to reproduce itself. It is not by chance that the references to the purchase of the right to receive the dole cluster in the Severan age, after a period in which serious outbreaks of epidemic disease led to high levels of mortality.

Causes of decline

We have, for the years of Septimius Severus, a piece of information which suggests that the privileged section of the population of Rome had decreased since the days of the early empire. Cassius Dio tells us that on the occasion of the *Decennalia*, the emperor would distribute an extraordinary *congiarium* of ten *aurei* per head. Cassius Dio adds that this liberality would have cost the emperor 200 million sesterces (Cass. Dio 77 (76).1.1 Xiphilinus). From this we can deduce that the *congiarium* would have been distributed to 200,000 beneficiaries. These were, first, the adult males belonging to the *plebs frumentaria*, to which also those below seventeen could be added. Moreover we learn from Cassius Dio that in this case the *congiarium* would have been given also to the troops stationed in Rome, first among them the praetorians. The number of those belonging to the *plebs frumentaria* must certainly have been some tens of thousands lower than the number of the beneficiaries when Augustus fixed it, and hence lower than 200,000 adult males.

As to the number of the inhabitants of Rome of citizen status not belonging to the *plebs frumentaria*, we do not have any means of estimating it, nor have we any information on the number of *peregrini* and slaves. Cassius Dio gives us, however, a significant piece of information, when he stresses the seriousness of the epidemic that struck Rome in 189 CE, with over 2,000 people apparently dying daily (Cass. Dio. 73.14.3–4). From the mid-60s of the second century, epidemic disease, probably smallpox, ravaged many regions of the empire for more than twenty years, and as a result the population shrank. The recovery in the first decades of the third century would not have

been such as to allow the population to reach again the level attained before the Antonine plague, when there were new outbreaks between 250 and 270 CE. Moreover, the troubles that affected the empire, especially during the fifty years between the end of the Severan dynasty and the accession of Diocletian in 284, must have had a strong impact on the size of the population of Rome: the emperors spent most of their time out of Rome, which meant the loss of the central role played by the city as the residence of the emperor and the court. The strengthening of the empire with the accession of Diocletian would not necessarily have resulted in an increase in the population of Rome, since Rome was no longer an imperial residence. Even less could the population have increased in the years of Constantine, when the new Rome was founded on the Bosphorus. However, the continuing presence in Rome of an aristocracy still rich or even richer than before must have represented a pull factor.

It is in this light that we must evaluate the data that we can derive from the three legal texts that give us valuable information about the contribution of pork for consumption in Rome, the so called *canon suarius* (see above p. 143–44). The law of 367 establishes a complex mechanism to compensate the guild of the *suarii* for the damage incurred in collecting the pigs. From what is said about this mechanism it is possible to calculate the total amount of pork that should have arrived in Rome every year at 8,000,000 pounds, which does not seem to be just the quantity freely distributed, but also to include (part of) the pork sold in the market. From the law of Honorius of 419 we learn that the number of monthly rations of pork distributed daily to the beneficiaries of these distributions was 4,000, and that each ration was 5 pounds; we learn as well that the distributions lasted for five months. From these data it is easy to calculate the number of the beneficiaries to be 120,000 (that is, 4,000 per 30 days), and the quantity of pork distributed every year, 3,000,000 pounds (25 pounds per 120,000 beneficiaries). The Novella of Valentinian III of 452 provides data from which it is possible to calculate the size of the *canon suarius* in that year as 3,629,000 pounds. This evidence seems to suggest that the population of Rome, which amounted to several hundreds of thousands in the sixties of the fourth century, had decreased by perhaps a half some decades later. Alaric's sack of 410 would have induced a substantial proportion of the population to abandon the city without coming back.

Even more decisive in emptying Rome must have been the two other sacks of 455 and 472, and the loss of supplies from Africa. Throughout its history the size of the population of Rome had been a by-product of conquest and empire. It is only natural, then, that the ultimate fate of the city cannot but have been the same as that of the western Roman empire as a whole.

Guide to Further Reading

In general, see Kolb 1995, 448–507; Lo Cascio 2000 and 2001b; Morley 1996; Morley 2013; Purcell 1994; Storey 1997 proposes a lower population count, but this has been largely rejected by scholars. On the so-called “low” and “high” count of the population of the Italian peninsula as a whole, see now Launaro 2011; de Ligt 2012; and Hin 2013.

For poor living conditions in Rome and the so-called “urban graveyard effect,” see Jongman 2003; Morley 1996 and 2005; Scheidel 2003 and 2013; Scobie 1986; and Shaw 1996. For objections both to this model and the validity of its application to Rome, see Sharlin 1978 and 1981; van der Woude 1982; and Lo Cascio 2001a, 2006, and 2016. For a more positive account of living conditions, see Laurence 1997.

On the role of slavery in the growth of the population of Rome, see Jongman 2003; also Scheidel 2005 for numbers of slaves. On migration to Rome, see Broadhead 2008; Erdkamp 2008; Holleran 2011; Lo Cascio 2016; Morley 1996 and 2003; Purcell 1994; Scheidel 2004.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

Social Structure and the *plebs Romana*

David Noy

Introduction

These three inscriptions illustrate some of the complexity of Rome's social structure:

1. [...] Pupius, son of Aulus, *magister* of the *pagus* of the Janiculum, arranged for the building of the portico, *cella*, kitchen and altar according to the decision of the *pagus* (*CIL* 1² 1,000 = 6.2219).
2. Heliodorus the Palmyrene and C. Licinius N [...] built the temple for Bel, Iaribol, Malachbel and the gods of Palmyra [with their own money?]. (*CIL* 6.50 = *IGUR* 117).
3. Sacred to Silvanus. P. Quintius Zosimus gave as a gift for the wellbeing of Cn. Turpilius Geminus, son of Gnaeus, the marble statue of Silvanus. Higinus the slave and steward also erected and dedicated the ancient, damaged Silvanus and remade it from his own resources (*CIL* 6.615).

All these men used their time or money in the service of their gods, and left an inscription to make sure that posterity would know about their good deeds. Beyond that they seem to have little in common. In Inscription 1, a freeborn man acts on behalf of one of the city's traditional neighborhoods. In 2, someone from Palmyra honors his native gods, and would be assumed to be a free non-citizen (*peregrinus*) except that another inscription shows he probably had the full name M. Aurelius Heliodorus Hadrianus (Noy 2000, 243). In 3, a free man and a slave both spend their money on statues of Silvanus, and the slave is able to claim just as much credit; the free man may be a client promoting his patron's interests.

Inscriptions form an important source for studying the *plebs Romana*, but caution is required: leaving an inscription (usually an epitaph or dedication) in itself required a degree of wealth and the adoption of the "epigraphic habit," thus excluding the poor, the unromanized, or migrants whose remains were sent home for burial, while over-representing prosperous ex-slaves (Purcell 1994, 656; Lo Cascio 2000a, 19).

Literary sources for the *plebs* in the late Republic are plentiful, both contemporary (Cicero, Sallust) and later (Asconius, Appian), but the writers'

interest was in the *plebs*' political role, not in their lives. In the early empire, Juvenal and Martial claim to be writing from the viewpoint of the more respectable part of the *plebs*, but they aimed primarily to entertain elite readers and do not give an unbiased account of real life. When Juvenal (10.77–81) writes that the *plebs* are quite happy about their votes no longer mattering, this cannot be taken as a straightforward statement of how they really felt (*contra* Jakobson 1992, 52). The xenophobic feelings expressed by the personae of some of Juvenal's satires do not necessarily represent a whole section of society (*contra* Yavetz 1988, 170–71). Anecdotes which throw incidental light on urban life as background for their main message may sometimes be more informative, such as Ovid's description of the *plebs* holding a communal picnic on the Campus Martius on 15 March, the feast of Anna Perenna (*Fast.* 3.523–42).

The term *plebs Romana* also requires some definition (see Yavetz 1969a, 141–55 for discussion of the various terms used for the Roman people). *Plebs* lost its original significance of plebeian as opposed to patrician, and came to mean “the common people with Roman citizenship” as opposed to the senate and *equites*. When Cicero goes through the groups who hate Piso (*Pis.* 27.64), he lists “the senate ... the *equites Romani* ... the *plebs Romana* ... the whole of Italy.” *Plebs Romana* was often a positive term, referring to the people's role in the traditional constitution. The term *plebs urbana*, the common people who lived within the city, is found on coins and in inscriptions (Kühnert 1991, 24), but was sometimes associated with negative qualities: Sallust (*Cat.* 37), for example, describes them as *praeceps*, i.e. volatile or ready for revolution. For most purposes, *plebs* includes ex-slaves, but excludes two major population groups: slaves and *peregrini*. How far it includes women is often unclear, since they did not share most political and economic rights.

Legal Status

Legal status (citizen, slave or *peregrinus*) was of great importance at certain times: in the law courts, at elections. Exactly how one's citizen status was proved is a matter of some debate (Gardner 1986). But how far did it matter at other times? Would a customer in a shop know if the person behind the counter was free or slave? Were the worshippers of the Palmyrene gods interested in whether the priest was a Roman citizen?

When the Urban Prefect L. Pedanius Secundus was murdered by one of his slaves in 61 CE, legal status was a matter of life and death (*Tac. Ann.* 14.42–5). The senate decided to uphold the law that all slaves living under the same roof should be executed (presumably by crucifixion outside the city). This

amounted to 400 people (including women and children) – perhaps a rhetorical exaggeration, but still good evidence for the size of a large slave household. There was rioting by the *plebs*, and a mob armed with stones and torches had to be kept at bay by soldiers while the executions were carried out. A proposal to deport the ex-slaves in the household was vetoed by Nero, so proof of manumission must have been crucial. It has often been noted that the “mob” would have been made up primarily of slaves, ex-slaves and their descendants: feelings of solidarity, or objections to the authorities’ lack of *clementia*, were not determined by legal status, but punishments were (Yavetz 1969a, 34–5; 1988, 157).

At public entertainment, seating was allocated by gender and status, particularly after Augustus’s *lex Iulia theatralis* (Suet. *Aug.* 44; Rawson 1987), although it is unclear how a spectator would, for example, prove his right to sit among the married men. Ambassadors from free cities were not allowed to sit with senators in the front rows in case they included ex-slaves. Men without togas were kept at the back with women and slaves. Augustus’s logic seems to have been that the Roman population was on display to the world. Wearing the toga to symbolize Roman citizenship was largely an Augustan development, although prohibiting non-citizens from wearing it seems to have happened later (Dench 2005, 276–9).

Legal status also mattered at times when particular groups of people were expelled from the city (Noy 2000, 37–47; Moatti 2013, 83–5). Citizenship conferred the right to live in the city, so those expelled (before Late Antiquity) were non-citizens liable to summary treatment by the magistrates. Expulsions were motivated by food shortages or actual or potential civil unrest, and the groups targeted were defined by status, profession or ethnicity. All *peregrini* were expelled in 126 and 65 BCE; all gladiators, slaves for sale, and *peregrini* except doctors and teachers in 6 CE. Ethnic groups expelled at various times included Jews, Macedonians, Gauls, and Germans. Astrologers and actors were the most frequently expelled professions. It seems that the expulsions were normally symbolic, since the expelled groups were soon able to return, and central records probably did not exist to facilitate a thorough round-up of any particular group. The mechanics of the expulsions are unknown, but Appian (*Mac.* 11.9) describes (perhaps imaginatively) how the Macedonians given a few hours’ notice to leave in 171 BCE had to sleep in the roads and could not find animals to transport their goods. While expulsions were ordered by the authorities, the *plebs* themselves could be jealous of their privileges, as in the 340s, when they objected that the largesse of the praetor Lampadius was going to the “unworthy,” meaning those who were not domiciled at Rome (Amm. Marc. 27.3.5–10; Cracco Ruggini 1997, 178–9). Legislation in 382 against able-bodied beggars at Rome may have been motivated partly by the discontent of the *plebs* at the arrival of the destitute from the countryside (*Cod. Theod.* 14.18.1; Cracco Ruggini 1997, 185–8).

In other contexts, the evidence suggests that legal status was not at all apparent. Cicero derides Clodius for recruiting his gangs from slaves, but they really included ex-slaves and the freeborn poor (Flambard 1977, 123). He refers to Lydians, Mysians, and Phrygians gathered for the trial of Flaccus, and to Jews making trouble at the *contiones* (Flac. 3, 67). He represents them as “un-Roman,” but they must have included citizen ex-slaves or their descendants as well as *peregrini* and slaves. In Inscription 3, a slave is able to represent himself as independent in everything except status.

Legal status was most likely to be changed by manumission of a slave (Bradley 1994, 154–65). Manumission was very common at Rome, allegedly in order to make the ex-slaves eligible for the corn-dole (Cass. Dio 39.24) until the number of recipients was capped by Caesar and Augustus. It was harder for a *peregrinus* living at Rome to acquire citizenship, since it could not be done by marriage to a citizen. Ex-governors often brought members of the provincial elite back to Rome with them (Bowersock 2005, 55), but presumably granted them citizenship first. According to the soldier in *Acts* 22.26–8, “buying” citizenship, i.e. bribing an official, was the normal route, and that was probably easier in a province than at Rome, where grant of citizenship by the emperor must have been the main method. Pliny (*Ep.* 10.5) asked Trajan to grant citizenship to Arpocras, who had treated him when he was ill. It would probably need the influence of someone who had the emperor’s ear to secure the privilege, and a “good” emperor like Trajan would expect evidence of the potential citizen’s deserts. After the *Constitutio Antoniniana* of 212 CE extended citizenship to all free inhabitants, this was no longer an issue.

Immigrants and Natives

It is widely agreed that constant immigration was necessary for demographic reasons, so that Rome’s population consisted predominantly of the descendants of slave and free immigrants (Kühnert 1991, 29; Purcell 1994, 650; Lo Cascio 2001, 43). For ancient writers wishing to make a rhetorical point, the foreignness (usually Greekness) of the population was something to emphasize: “For the plebeians are now much mixed with foreign blood, freedmen have equal rights of citizenship with them, and slaves are dressed in the same fashion as their masters” (App. *B Civ.* 2.120, on events of 44 BCE).

Not all ex-slaves were immigrants, since *vernae* formed a significant proportion of the slave population, but Cicero (*Cat.* 4.8.16) makes a contrast between freedmen “who judge this city to be their native land,” and those born at Rome in high places “who have judged it to be not their native land

but a city of enemies.” The predominance of the ex-slave element was often emphasized. According to Tacitus (*Ann.* 13.27), in a debate in the senate over allowing masters to re-enslave their ex-slaves, those against the proposal said that ex-slaves composed “most of the tribes [of urban citizens] and *decuriae* [of public servants], the servants of magistrates and priests, the cohorts enrolled in the city.” Hence Purcell writes (1994, 662–3): “The history of the Roman *libertinus* is the history of the *plebs urbana* and the history of the city, socially, economically and culturally.”

However, it is perhaps worth noting that throughout the nineteenth century over 60 % of the population of London was born there (Shannon 1935, 83; this does not of course indicate how far back their London ancestry went). The freeborn, native element of Rome’s population is rarely mentioned by ancient writers, and attracted little attention in modern scholarship until recently (see now Horsfall 2003). Pupius of Inscription 1 belonged to this group in the late Republic, and the *pagani* whom he represented may predominantly have done so too. Trajan expanded the *alimenta* scheme of state support for families to include 5,000 freeborn boys from the *plebs urbana* (Plin. *Pan.* 28.4; Viriouv 2009, 74–9). Pliny says they will replenish the army and civilian population, so their own children will not need *alimenta*. Some freeborn girls were also included in the corn-dole as *puellae Faustinianae* by Marcus Aurelius (*CIL* 6.10222; Viriouv 2009, 204). There was evidently no requirement for more than one generation of free, Roman ancestry, but rearing children was encouraged at Rome as well as in rural Italy. At the same time, Juvenal’s Umbricius was able to represent himself as a native of the Aventine (3.85) forced out of Rome by “Greeks” (predominantly those from Syria).

A substantial proportion of free migrants who came to Rome would have been Italians with Roman citizenship, drawn by both “push” and “pull” factors: in the late Republic, these would have been primarily loss of farmland (and other displacement caused by civil war) and availability of the corn-dole respectively. Appian (*B Civ.* 2.120) blames the corn-dole for drawing to Rome “the lazy, the beggars, the vagrants of all Italy.” It has been estimated that in the first century BCE, up to a third of rural Italian young men who reached the age of 20 would relocate permanently (Scheidel 2004, 18–19), most often to Rome as it had a much stronger “pull” than other cities, including the availability of casual work, and the possibility of various sorts of private largesse. Sallust (*Cat.* 37) refers unsympathetically to “the youth who had tolerated poverty with the earnings of manual labor in the countryside, but, attracted by private and public benefactions, preferred idleness in the city to unwelcome labor.” Such people would have formed one of the least distinctive parts of the population to contemporaries (since they spoke Latin) and in the epigraphic record.

Were the migrants predominantly young and male, as Sallust implies? Most of

the economic attractions of the city were only available to males, suggesting a considerable gender imbalance; poor females migrating alone may have had little alternative to prostitution (Evans 1991, 144). Rutilia Priscilla of Altinum, aged 29, was commemorated by her husband of nine years L. Iunius Avitus (*CIL* 6.25678). Did they come from Altinum together? Did he come to Rome first and she joined him when he was in a position to support her? Or did she come to Rome independently? Prowse *et al.* (2007) use dental evidence from the Isola Sacra necropolis to suggest that there was a high rate of migration by families within Italy or from the northern provinces: 14 individuals in a sample of 61 appeared to have migrated as children (including one perhaps from North Africa; several more migrated as adults). While this type of study has much potential for a greater understanding of migration patterns, it may not prove as much as the authors claim; Bruun 2010 considers other possible explanations for the findings. The method cannot be used on cremated remains and therefore excludes most of the evidence from Rome up to the late second century CE. Some child migrants would have been slaves rather than members of families.

The decision to record the place of origin in an inscription must have depended very much on context: it was not a random choice, but was much more likely to be made in some circumstances than others, e.g. when Palmyrenes honored their own gods in Inscription 2. It is therefore impossible to know how often it was decided not to record it, especially as many immigrants had very romanized names which give no indication of where they came from.

Latin was used for all official purposes and would have been the common language within multiracial slave households, but immigrants brought their own languages with them, which (given the apparent lack of segregation of ethnic groups) must have been audible in *insulae* and commercial premises (Horsfall 2003, 50). However, even languages with a strong epigraphic tradition such as Palmyrene were rarely inscribed (Inscription 2 has equivalent texts in Latin and Greek, but not Palmyrene), and western European languages without such a tradition never were. Greek was to some extent a native language of Rome (beginning with migration from southern Italy), and was inscribed by immigrants, the medical profession, and members of the elite wishing to show their literary accomplishments. It was also used for the internal audiences of some religious cults whereas Latin was used for a wider readership (Belayche 2007, 251–3). Jews at Rome retained the use of Greek in their inscriptions, although Christians changed to Latin for their liturgical language (Noy 1997). The dedicants to Silvanus in Inscription 3 have Greek names but wrote in Latin.

Migration to Rome was not necessarily intended to be permanent. Some people came for a time-limited purpose such as education or military service, or to accompany a relative. Temporary migrants were the people most likely

to produce inscriptions using traditional forms of expression from their native place (Belayche 2007, 260). Some may have intended to return home after earning enough at Rome for a comfortable retirement, and only appear in the epigraphic record if they died at Rome before their plans were fulfilled. People involved in overseas trade or, like the Annaei of Cordoba, intellectual life seem to have moved freely between Rome and their home without being permanent residents of either (Noy 2009).

One solution to Rome's perceived overpopulation which was much discussed in the late Republic was the foundation of colonies for the urban poor. For Dionysius of Halicarnassus (an immigrant himself), it was a moral issue (*Ant. Rom.* 4.24.8): the degenerate ex-slave part of the population could be disposed of on the pretext of founding colonies, since straightforward expulsion was no longer acceptable. Dio Chrysostom (*Or.* 7.107), on the other hand, recommends sending the urban poor to rural colonies in order to keep their respectability. C. Gracchus was the first to propose it seriously, and Julius Caesar put it into action, "sending out 80,000 citizens to overseas colonies" (Suet. *Iul.* 42). Nerva spent HS 60,000,000 on the purchase of land for the very poor (Cass. Dio 68.2.2). It is not clear how far it was a response to what the poor themselves wanted, rather than a measure imposed from above.

Wealth and Poverty

It is clear that Rome was a city of extremes: aristocrats lived in virtual palaces with hundreds of domestic staff, like L. Pedanius Secundus, while others camped out under arches or squatted in tombs; beggars were widespread (Scobie 1986, 402–3, 419). The poor probably resented the ostentatious wealth and callous attitude of the elite (Scobie 1986, 431). Cicero (*Att.* 14.9.1) notoriously jokes that "two of my *tabernae* have collapsed, and the rest are full of cracks, so that not only the tenants but even the mice have moved out." His point is that, fortified by philosophy, he did not consider the loss a calamity, but of course he had no interest in the fate of the tenants who must, even at the best of times, have lived in conditions of considerable insecurity. Upward social mobility such as that displayed by P. Vedius Pollio, a freedman's son who acquired a mansion on the Esquiline (Cass. Dio 54.23), was exceptional.

There has been much debate about whether the population consisted only of rich and poor (as many ancient sources imply, e.g. Amm. Marc. 14.6.25) or whether there was a "middling" or "moderately prosperous" element, as argued by, e.g., Yakobson (1992, 43–4), Millar (1998, 203) and Jongman (2007, 597, 615). People who in a town would have formed the curial class

with property of HS 100,000, in Rome could only be part of the *plebs*. Veyne (2000, 1171–4) makes much of the expression used by Plin. *HN* 26.3: *plebes humilis aut media*. The context is a discussion of a new disease which was passed on by kissing and therefore did not affect women, slaves or *plebs*, but only the male elite who had the custom of kissing people outside the family. Pliny's point was simply to emphasize that his statement applied to all the *plebs*. However, Veyne sees the *plebs media* as those with enough resources not to have to worry about the next day. They would include those who lived in the city on the income from land: Remmius Palaemon the grammarian also ran clothes-making workshops and planted commercial vines with his own hand (Suet. *Gram. et rhet.* 23).

Other ancient writers divided the *plebs* on moral rather than economic grounds. Tacitus (*Hist.* 1.4.3) distinguishes between the *pars populi integra* who were attached to the great houses and the *plebs sordida* who were not. The latter may represent the very poor, but they are condemned by the elite for their views or behavior rather than directly for their poverty. Those described as poor (*pauperes, tenuiores*) were generally defined in opposition to the rich, and were different from the destitute (*egentes*) (Veyne 2000, 1188–9). The latter were largely ignored unless they rioted, until they began to benefit from predominantly Christian charity from the rich in the fourth century (Cracco Ruggini 1997, 185–6). Those classed as poor by the elite did not necessarily consider themselves to be so. In an epitaph (*CIL* 6.9545), the freedman pearl-dealer, C. Atilius Euhodus, someone who might have seemed *pauper* to the very rich, shows that he differentiated himself by describing himself as “a good man, merciful, lover of the poor.”

It was the reasonably prosperous artisans and shopkeepers who were in a position to build tombs and leave epitaphs (Veyne 2000, 1179). They were often ex-slaves, and in many cases benefited from their patrons' capital, as Euhodus probably did (Purcell 1994, 663). These were the people for whom *industria* and *labor* were virtues to be commemorated (Veyne 2000, 1186), and whose jobs were a matter of pride (Inscription 3). The baker and contractor M. Vergilius Eurysaces, who left a very elaborate tomb near the Porta Praenestina depicting his working life (*CIL* 6.1958), is usually assumed to be a freedman or the son of one, on the basis of his trade and Greek cognomen. M. Caedicius Iucundus, 30-year-old goldsmith from the Via Sacra, and C. Iulius Epaphra, fruiterer from the Circus Maximus (*CIL* 6.9207, 9822), are more typical examples of shopkeepers who could afford epitaphs, and who left it unclear whether or not they were freeborn (Epaphra was married to a freedwoman).

These respectable citizens were the same class as the *tabernarii* who, according to Cicero, were ready to close their shops and follow Clodius whenever the order was given. Closed shops (*tabernae clausae*) stood for political violence and intimidation to Cicero (references collected by

Flambard 1977, 124). It was normal for *tabernae* around the Forum to close when a vote was taking place (Millar 1998, 37), but shopkeepers would not have made a living from closing their shops indiscriminately. They are more likely to have closed in order to protect their stock if violence was expected, as when the city was beset by famine and brigands during the triumviral period (App. *B.Civ.* 5.18; Yavetz (1969a, 84) calls this a strike). When Cicero (*Cat.* 4.17) refers to a hypothetical revolutionary agent going round the *tabernae* to stir up the *egentes*, he may not be thinking of the shopkeepers and artisans who would have much to lose at times of revolution (Rini 1983, 178), but of other people gathered there for company when they did not have work to go to. Cancellation of debts, as proposed by e.g. Catiline (Sall. *Cat.* 22), would not benefit the very poor whose lack of security would prevent them accruing significant debt, or *tabernarii* who gave credit to their customers. Cancellation of rent would have been more widely beneficial: Julius Caesar remitted a year's rent up to HS 2,000 for people in Rome, and the upper limit may have been intended to benefit shopkeepers (Brunt 1966, 13).

Social Relations

Patronage has been widely regarded as the crucial element in social relations at Rome. The image of the poor client paying an early-morning call on his patron (*salutatio*) and then often following him round during the day is presented vividly by Martial and Juvenal, and something similar can be found in the world of Cicero, especially at election time. The houses of the elite were designed to facilitate the visits of clients to public rooms but exclude them from private areas (Vitr. *De Arch.* 6.5.1). In reality, this sort of patronage must have been of relatively limited application. It appears to have involved only men, who were of citizen status and did not have anything else to do, as noted by Cicero (*Mur.* 70), or who thought the rewards of clientship were greater than those of independence. Horace (*Epist.* 1.7.46–98; cf. Horsfall 2003, 28) offers the cautionary tale of the auctioneer Volteius Mena, in whom the orator Philippus takes an interest. Philippus initially enquires “who is his father or patron?” (he appears to be poor but independent). At first Mena is too busy with work to accept Philippus's invitation to dine, but eventually he becomes “an early-morning client and regular guest”, and accepts a gift and loan to buy a small farm, by which time he addresses Philippus as “patron,” before regretting the whole arrangement.

Yavetz (1969a, 95–6) argues that Augustus tried to remove the patronage of aristocratic families and make the whole population into his own clients, but this is contested by Griffin (1991, 33). If Ammianus (14.6.12–17) can be

believed, the system of private *clientela* was still flourishing in the fourth century. He describes a “respectable stranger” visiting a wealthy Roman for the first time and receiving a warm welcome at first, but then being added to the clients who are expected to pay daily visits to receive handouts (*sportulae*), while charioteers and gamblers take priority for dinner invitations, and the wealthy parade through the streets followed by crowds of domestic slaves along with “the idle *plebs* of the neighborhood”. The receipt of the *sportula* was the *quid pro quo* of patronage, and potentially an important source of income to clients (Cracco Ruggini 1997, 160), but would have benefited only those whose attendance was desired by the patron, so not the very poor.

Women are not recorded as clients, since the system was originally aimed at securing votes, and rarely as patrons. The freedwoman Manlia Gnome claims in her epitaph that “I had many clients”, but this otherwise unparalleled expression may mean simply that she had many friends (*CIL* 6.21975 = *CLE* 67; Kruschwitz 2001, 53).

For others, patronage which involved employment, financial backing for a business or the provision of somewhere to live would have been of much more significance than the *sportula*, and that perhaps lies behind Inscription 3. There was also largesse aimed at the population as a whole, such as that provided at a triumph, succinctly described by Purcell (1994, 681): “The *triumphator* gave the grateful plebeians the means to commemorate his greatness: that simple formula is the secret of the relationship between the elite and the people of the city.” In the late Republic, the wealthy could provide general patronage with communal meals as well as entertainment and public buildings, but these gradually became an imperial monopoly under Augustus (Varro *Rust.* 3.2.16; Cass. Dio 54.2; Purcell 1996, 803).

For many Romans, the most important part of the social structure was the *collegia*: associations for men based on an occupation, religious cult or neighborhood. They were sometimes closely associated with the *vici* into which Rome was divided (Tatum 1999, 25). The *pagus* in Inscription 1 also worked like a *collegium*, and in the late Republic the crossroads shrines called *compita* were foci around which the *plebs* organized (Lott 2013, 177–8). *Collegia* could be part of the patronage system, since they often had sponsors from the elite (occasionally women), but also a method of self-help. Their history at Rome was checkered (de Ligt 2000, 242–52). They were apparently authorized by the Twelve Tables provided that they did not threaten public order (*Dig.* 47.22.4). *Collegia* “which seemed to have been formed against the state” were banned between 64 and 58 BCE, although it is not clear how this could have been enforced, since prosecution of individuals would have been slow, and there was little police machinery for using force to break up meetings. As tribune, Clodius brought a law “to restore the *collegia* and set up new ones” (*Asc. Mil.* 8C). Membership of the new *collegia* was recorded

vicus by *vicus* (Tatum 1999, 118), which Cicero repeatedly mocked as “an enlistment of slaves,” and involved people of all statuses although it may have been particularly relevant to those who were too poor to join the older *collegia*. The respectable *collegia* of many inscriptions are the other face of the “Clodian gangs” denounced by Cicero. A *lex Licinia* of 55 BCE prohibited *sodalitates* (presumably a subdivision of the *collegia*) aimed at electoral violence or bribery. Julius Caesar “abolished all *collegia* apart from those founded anciently,” and Augustus “dissolved the *collegia* apart from ancient and legitimate ones,” presumably meaning those which had been set up since Caesar’s time (Suet. *Iul.* 42; *Aug.* 32). Caligula allowed the reintroduction of some which were then banned by Claudius (Cass. Dio 60.6.6). An inscription for the *collegium symphonicorum* records that they were permitted to meet by the senate “according to the *lex Iulia* by the authority of Augustus for the purpose of games” (*CIL* 6.2193 = 4416). Rowe (2002, 92) suggests that *collegia* petitioned individually for approval, but this may have been necessary only if they wanted to do more than was allowed by an early imperial *senatusconsultum* which permitted *tenuiores* to hold monthly meetings and collect money for religious purposes (de Ligt 2000, 247–50). Their supervision eventually became the duty of the Urban Prefect (*Dig.* 1.12.1.14).

Collegia had their own magistrates. A legal text refers to their common funds and an executive acting “as if in a republic” (*Dig.* 3.4.1.1). The well-attested builders’ and carpenters’ association, *collegium fabrum tignariorum* (*AE* 1941, 69–71; *AE* 2004, 285; *CIL* 6.996, 1060, 9405–8; Purcell 1996, 794) had *quinquennales*, *honorati*, *decuriones* and *scribae*, and its members were organized in *decuriae*. It even had its own era, dating from 7 BCE, probably the year when it was authorized by the *lex Iulia*. It made dedications to second-century emperors, and organized burials. Its magistrates, who included freeborn and ex-slaves, had their titles recorded in epitaphs in the same way that state officials would have done. They clearly enjoyed the prestige and status, since office-holding in the state was not open to them, and Yavetz (1988, 169) notes: “An impressive title in a lower order may become a substitute for not being accepted into a higher one.” Advice on electioneering assumed that gaining the support of the *collegia* leaders would also bring the votes of the ordinary members (Q. Cic. *Comment. Pet.* 30). Members enjoyed social activities, but it is generally thought that the *collegia* did not act like guilds in promoting their economic interests (Vanderbroeck 1987, 167).

Collegia were not formed at Rome on an ethnic basis, so sometimes served as a means of integration into Roman society for people of different backgrounds. The Jews of Rome were organized in synagogues with their own officials, which may have been treated legally as *collegia* (see Harland 2003, 162–9). These were expressions of loyalty to the state, since two of them were named after Augustus and Agrippa, but provided a mechanism for

a separate Jewish identity to be handed down from one generation to the next in a way which was not possible for Thracians or Palmyrenes.

Public Opinion

The *plebs* seem to have had their own heroes, who received support in life or after death. The Gracchi and Marius relied on their votes for legislation and elections, although they had some backing among the elite. The body of the murdered Clodius was surrounded in his atrium by “a very great crowd of the lowest *plebs* and slaves” (Asc. *Mil.* 32C). Sometimes it was a cause rather than an individual which attracted support: mass protests made Hortensia’s campaign against a tax on wealthy women impossible for the triumvirs to reject (Purcell 1996, 806). Octavia, who can hardly have had her own power-base, was supported by popular demonstrations when Nero divorced her, and Tacitus notes that it was easier for the people to back her because they had less to lose (Suet. *Nero* 35; Tac. *Ann.* 14.59–60). In this case, the *plebs*’ support was probably not based on self-interest, and Nero was otherwise popular.

The fickleness of the *plebs* is derided by many sources. According to Cassius Dio (45.11.3–4), discussing how they switched between Antony and Octavian, the *plebs*’ natural tendency was to support a change in government. This might be interpreted more realistically as supporting whoever offered them improved conditions. Their first interest was in peace and a secure food supply (Newbold 1972, 309). Beyond expecting their leaders to provide entertainment, they may also have supported those who stood up to the senate, a reason offered for their favoring the accession of Claudius (Joseph. *AJ.* 19.228; Yavetz 1969a, 54, 114–15).

Clodius was not the last leader to rely on the support of the *plebs*. Augustus did not abolish the corn-dole, for fear of someone else using its reinstatement to gain popularity (Suet. *Aug.* 42). In 45–4 BCE, a man claiming to be the grandson of Marius caused great trouble in Rome (Yavetz 1969a, 58–62, 70–4; Rini 1983, 162–71). His supporters were described as “impure and wicked free men, bold and criminal slaves” (Cic. *Phil.* 1.2.5) and members of *collegia* (Val. Max. 9.15.1). It is significant that a man of lower-class background (he is generally described as a freedman) could only get support by claiming to belong to the elite. There is virtually no evidence for genuine members of the *plebs* achieving positions of leadership, even the tribunate from which they were not excluded by property qualification; their highest role was what Vanderbroeck (1987, 52–65) calls intermediate leadership, organizing the people on behalf of members of the elite. It was the elite who fomented most riots in the late Republic (Aldrete 2013, 427).

Suetonius (*Claud.* 25) refers to the Jews being expelled from Rome because they were causing disturbances *impulsore Chresto* (at the instigation of Chrestus), and whatever this much-debated passage actually means, the possibility of trouble being fomented in the city was clearly realistic. Wealthy freedmen were the object of a special tax in 31 BCE, and their protests led to riots and arson (Cass. Dio 50.10.4). In 6 CE, famine, taxes, and fire damage led to dissension allegedly organized by P. Plautius Rufus, which Augustus countered by solving the food shortage and providing gladiatorial games (Cass. Dio 55.27). The *plebs* recurrently used violence to force the senate's hand, e.g. against Piso and Sejanus (Rowe 2002, 99). Claudius was attacked by a mob in the Forum during a food shortage, but on another occasion a false rumor of his death caused the people to make an assault on the senate (Suet. *Claud.* 12, 18). Suppression was rarely used, but a ratio of at least 1 soldier to 100 civilians was a strong deterrent when necessary (Griffin 1991, 40; see also Coulston, Chapter 8 in this volume).

Games were already a recognized venue for the expression of public opinion in the late Republic, although the composition of audiences may have been manipulated by the organizers of events so that they did not always truly express general opinion (Vanderbroeck 1987, 81). Local organizations such as the *pagus* in Inscription 1 made decisions about local matters, but are unlikely to have expressed an opinion on politics. The theatre became a venue for almost formal petitioning of the emperor (Rowe 2002, 92), and license was allowed for protest at the Circus Maximus. Purcell (1996, 804) sees the political dimension of the *spectacula* as part of a long tradition, which was why people of senatorial and equestrian rank were so keen to participate. As emperors began to spend increasingly little time at Rome, their *adventus* became an important occasion for the urban *plebs* to honor them (Purcell 2000, 411), and presumably to make their opinion known.

It should not be assumed that the *plebs urbana* was always a united body. Ties of *clientela* may have overridden loyalty to “popular” causes (Brunt 1966, 21; Vanderbroeck 1987, 165). Often the *tabernarii* would have had different interests from the *egentes*, and there would have been little to unite the men in Inscriptions 1, 2, and 3. Members of the elite might see the *plebs Romana* as an undifferentiated mass, but the *plebs* themselves were more likely to identify with a god or a *collegium*.

Guide to Further Reading

Recent studies have emphasized the political role and independence of the *plebs* in the late Republic: Millar (1998), Wiseman (2009). Yavetz (1969a, 1969b, 1988) has provided the most influential discussion of their political role in the Republic; see Griffin (1991) for some disagreements, and Malkin

and Rubensohn (1994) for other studies influenced by his approach. It is widely accepted that the *plebs* were a stronger force with less capricious motives than the ancient sources admit, and that the control of the elite on the political system was less secure than it appeared. All these writers show skepticism about the attitudes of Cicero and Tacitus. Purcell (1994, 1996, 2000) explores other aspects of the life of the *plebs*, based predominantly on literary sources but also using archaeology and epigraphy. Horsfall's attempt (1996, 2003) to reconstruct their culture, particularly its oral nature, has received mixed reviews. The realities of life in Rome have been studied in detail, using predominantly literary evidence (Scobie 1986, Robinson 1992) or a mixture of literary and archaeological material (Coulston and Dodge 2000, Lo Cascio 2000b). The importance of the immigrant part of the population is now widely recognized: Noy (2000), Ricci (2005), Conti and Scardigli (2009). Moatti (2013) looks particularly at legal aspects. Scheidel (2004, 2005) has used comparative material and statistical methods to quantify free and slave population movements in Italy. Prowse *et al.* (2007) show how archaeological approaches may offer further insights in the future, although the prevalence of cremation at Rome limits the possibilities before the late second century CE.

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CHAPTER EIGHT

The Army in Imperial Rome

Jon Coulston

Introduction

Soldiers have been perennially present in Rome, from militias guarding the city against the incursions of neighbors from Latium and farther afield, to the military presence for security, ceremonial, and administrative duties in the city's *caserme* today. Soldiers "protecting" the senate and patrolling the streets were a more familiar sight during the troubled last generation of the Republic (e.g. Cass. Dio 42.23–4). In civil wars troops fought in and around the city, as when Marius's men engaged in street-battles against the populace in 87 BCE (Plut. *Mar.* 9.5–7), and Vitellian soldiers assaulted the Capitol in 69 CE (Tac. *Hist.* 3.71–3). Soldiers paraded through the streets of Rome during triumphs, traditionally singing ribald songs at the expense of the *triumphator*, presumably also running crowd control, and security on prisoners and booty (Versnel 1970; Künzl 1988; Favro 1994; 1996, 82–8, 236–43; Brilliant 1999; Beard 2007; Östenberg 2009; Busch 2011, 25). However, it was formally illegal for Republican military commanders to cross the *pomerium* into the city with their forces without such special dispensation (Richardson 1991, 3; Sablayrolles 2001, 128–30; Busch 2007, 317–18; Koortbojian 2010, 247–50; Busch 2011, 17–18; *LTUR* 4, 96–105). It was not until the establishment of the Principate that soldiers became a permanent component of Rome's population. Thereafter the numbers of soldiers increased steadily into the third century CE. Rome saw the largest permanent concentration of troops anywhere in the Roman empire, and became a city surrounded by fortified *castra* (Durry 1938, 9–40; Keppie 1984, 186–9; Lieb 1986; Stambaugh 1988, 124–28; Robinson 1992, 181–8; Panciera 1993; Nippel 1995, 90–98; Coulston 2000; Noy 2000, 19–22; Sablayrolles 2001; Busch 2007; 2011; Rankov 2007, 43–50, 72–3; Fuhrmann 2011, 113–18).

First, Augustus permanently instituted and expanded the traditional praetor's guard in nine *cohortes praetoriae*. He also followed Julius Caesar's lead in retaining a mounted bodyguard of Germanic barbarians, known as the *Germani corporis custodes*, or *Batavi* (Bellen 1981; Speidel 1984; 1994b, 15–31). As part of his urban reforms he created formations to maintain public order (three *cohortes urbanae*), and to prevent and tackle serious fires (seven *cohortes vigilum*). Soldiers (*classarii*) from the two Italian fleets, now often styled "marines," also came to be based in the capital, as did men from the

frontier armies on administrative duties (collectively known as “*peregrini*”). Tiberius took a logical step further by concentrating all the *cohortes praetoriae* and *urbanae* in one walled installation, the *castra praetoria* (Praetorian Fortress) (Figure 8.1). In the civil war of 68–9 CE Galba dissolved the *Batavi* (faithful to the Julio-Claudians), and Vitellius expanded the Praetorian Guard (which had backed Otho), but replaced its Italians with men promoted from his own Rhenish legions. This Guard¹ of sixteen *cohortes* was reduced back down to nine by Vespasian, and Italian recruitment was restored. Domitian added a tenth *cohors*. Meanwhile, there was no separate Horseguard until Trajan instituted the *equites singulares Augusti*, also known informally as “*Batavi*.” These men were drawn initially from the non-citizen auxiliary regiments of the Rhenish army which had first supported Trajan. A fourth *cohors urbana* also appeared in the Flavian period.



Figure 8.1 *castra praetoria*, exterior of the north corner.

Photograph: J.C.N. Coulston.

Some reforms to the military formations may have been made by Antonine emperors, but the greatest change came under Septimius Severus. Again the Praetorian Guard was in imperial disfavor, mainly for assassinating Pertinax, so Severus cashiered all the soldiers and replaced them with legionaries primarily from his own Danubian power-base (Cass. Dio 75.2.4). At the same time he very substantially increased the size of the *cohortes praetoriae*, *urbanae* and *vigilum*, and the *equites singulares Augusti*. For additional political security he stationed one of his newly formed legions at Albanum (Albano) in the Alban Hills. This establishment may have been reduced by detachments drawn away through the third century. In 312 CE the Rome formations again backed a loser in civil war, Maxentius, and after his defeat they were finally abolished by Constantine I (Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 40.25; Zos. 2.17).

This brought to an end three and a half centuries of permanent and substantial

military presence in the metropolis. While in some periods the soldiery was predominantly drawn from the communities of Italy, there were always northern “barbarians” in the Horseguard. Briefly under Vitellius, but continuously from Severus onwards, the *praetoriani* were made up of promoted *legionarii* from the European frontier provinces. The economic and cultural implications of this influx of personnel were significant and varied. Soldiers formed a professional community with distinct military identities which refused to become subsumed in the mass population of Rome. They served to escort and protect the emperor, police and facilitate public events, keep the urban peace and deal with fire hazards, and to administer the frontier armies.

The Praetorian Guard

The most renowned bodyguard formation of the ancient world was the Praetorian Guard based in Rome (Durry 1938; Passerini 1939; Kennedy 1978; Keppie 1996; Rankov 1994; Bingham 2012). Augustus formed nine praetorian formations (*cohortes praetoriae I–IX*), each approximately 500 strong, recruited from Italian and other citizens. These followed on from the Civil War Guard formations of Octavian and Marcus Antonius. Over them he set a pair of *praefecti praetorio* (Praetorian Prefects). These commanders were recruited from the *ordo equestris*, not the politically more dangerous *ordo senatus*; nevertheless pairing was an additional obstacle to conspiracy (Passerini 1939, 214–20; Howe 1942; Absil 1997, 83–111). Under the *praefecti* were equestrian *tribuni* commanding each *cohors*, and the *cohortes* were subdivided into *centuriae* commanded by *centuriones*. Augustus only stationed three *cohortes* in Rome, not wishing to make the force appear to be a tyrant’s army of occupation (Suet. *Aug.* 49; Tac. *Ann.* 4.2; Cass. Dio, 57.19.6; Durry 1938, 43–5; Passerini 1939, 49; Keppie 1996, 114–16).

This scattered billeting may have been politically desirable, but was not particularly efficient for the Guard’s duties. In 23 CE, following the self-interested advice of the *praefectus* P. Aelius Seianus, Tiberius concentrated the whole Guard together with the *cohortes urbanae* in a new, fortified base on the Esquiline plateau beyond the north-east “Servian Wall.” This *castra praetoria* was positioned to take advantage of flat ground for building, but it was also both convenient for collective intervention in the heart of the city and politically neutral, set as it was outside the *pomerium*. Still it was a considerable distance from the prime seat of daily activity, imperial residences on the Palatine. Significantly, this was considered to have been a formal re-foundation, indicated by the adoption of Tiberius’s Scorpio zodiac sign for the Guard’s insignia. Scorpions appeared on praetorian standards, shield blazons, armour, and presumably other equipment (Durry 1938, 205,

213; Passerini 1939, 51; Koepfel 1985, 152; Rankov 1994, 6, 26–7; Keppie 1996, 122–3; Coulston 2000, 92; Flower 2001; Töpfer 2011, 64, 96).

Concentration of the Guard in one place did hold potential political dangers. The immediate crisis of Seianus's rise demonstrated that the Guard, led by ambitious officers, could be a threat to the emperor's position. In 41 CE, on the death of Gaius, the *praetoriani* took full advantage of the crisis to ransack the Palatine residences. In so doing they discovered Claudius and bore him off to the *castra praetoria* as the next emperor (Joseph. *AJ* 19.188, 212–66; Suet. *Calig.* 58; *Claud.* 10; Cass. Dio 60.1.3; Wiseman 1991; Flaig 1992, 224–28).

Some time before 47 CE the Guard was increased by a quarter (*cohortes praetoriae X–XII*), perhaps by Claudius. In the Civil War of 68–9 CE the *praetoriani* had been whipped up against Galba by Otho (Tac. *Hist.* 1.38). Vitellius then defeated the Guard in battle with his veteran Rhenish legionary troops; his subsequent replacement of Italian praetorian recruits by promoted legionaries set a precedent for future victors. He increased the number of *cohortes* from twelve to sixteen, each 1,000 strong (Tac. *Hist.* 2.93). This was reduced back down to nine by Vespasian, and Italian recruitment was restored. Domitian added a tenth *cohors* and this number continued to the fourth century. However, the size of these *cohortes* has been hotly debated by scholars (summarized by Kennedy 1978; Rankov 1996, 7–8; Coulston 2000, 76–81). They may have been retained at the Vitellian strength in line with frontier army developments, for it is around this time that milliary units first appear amongst the provincial *auxilia* and as first *cohortes* of *legiones* (Breeze 1969; Saddington 1982, 174, 195). Perhaps the Flavian period also saw the incorporation of integral mounted troops into the Guard (*equites praetoriani*: “Hyginus,” 7–8, 30; Durry 1938, 99–100; Passerini 1939, 69–70), the formations now being *cohortes equitatae*. In addition to the Guard cavalry there was an inner guard of horsemen, the *speculatores Augusti* under a *centurio speculatorum* (Suet. *Calig.* 44, 52; *Claud.* 35; *Galb.* 18; *Otho* 5; Tac. *Hist.* 1.25, 31, 2.11; Durry 1938, 108–10; Rankov 1994, 8).

By the Antonine period the *cohortes praetoriae* were again milliary, and under Commodus or Septimius Severus, they each reached the strength of 1,500 men. If Severus was responsible, then this was part of sweeping punitive reforms occasioned by the Guard's murder of Pertinax in 193 CE (Cass. Dio 55.24.6, 75.1.1–2, 2.4; Herodian 2.13.10–12; SHA *Sev.* 6.11–7.1). Recruitment shifted again from Italians to promoted frontier *legionarii*, this time drawn primarily from the Danubian forces (Cass. Dio 75.2.4; Durry 1938, 87; Passerini 1939, 57, 59, 171–4; Birley 1969, 64–6; Smith 1972, 487–8, 494–9; Kennedy 1978, 290–301; Campbell 1984, 10–11; Birley 1988, 103, 196; Curran 2000, 26–8). Italians did filter back into the Guard, but this recruitment shift had far-reaching cultural implications for the “long” third century.

While concentration of the *cohortes praetoriae* and other troops in the *castra*

praetoria had its political liabilities, it also increased tactical control, eased administration, allowed greater disciplinary supervision, and fostered a more integrated formation identity (Tac. *Ann.* 4.2; Durry 1938, 45–54, 57–8; Keppie 1996, 111–12; Busch 2007, 325–30; Busch 2011, 31–72; Bruun 1987; *LTUR* 1, 251–4; 5, 209). The *castra* walls were constructed of brick-faced *opus caementicium* and were comparatively low with non-projecting towers. They were heightened at various times, most substantially in the 270s with incorporation in the Wall of Aurelian. Three sides of the fortress (1,050 meters long overall) were retained after 312 while the south-west wall was demolished (Figure 8.1). The curtain preserves blocked gates, towers, windows, parapets, and crenellations. These walls constitute both the sole extant *castra* defences in Rome, and the best set of fortifications surviving anywhere from the Principate (Richmond 1930; Cozza 1997; Mancini 2001, Pl. 8e–10e; Ivaldi 2005, 388–413; Dey 2011, 75; Busch 2011, 38–56). Modern knowledge of the interior arrangements is considerably more fragmentary, the buildings having been leveled after the defeat of Maxentius. Partial excavation has revealed rows of one-room units (*tabernae*) lining the inside of the walls and a number of barrack blocks (Cecilia 1986, Fig. 57; Coarelli 1995, 283; Coulston 2000, Fig. 5.9; Busch 2011, 56–69, Fig. 18, 25–6, 90; *LTUR* 1, Fig. 145). Most modern discussions have revolved around the size of the *castra* and the known formations located within. The area of 16.4 hectares would have been a bit tight (5000 *praetoriani* plus horses, 1500 *urbanici*, and an unknown number of *classarii*) by the standard of contemporary legionary fortresses (5,000 men in 20 hectares), but two or three-storey barracks, and the *tabernae*, would have met all demands on space. The Severan garrison was around 15,000 *praetoriani*, still feasible with multistorey accommodation, especially because at some point the *castra* was extended towards the south-east, and the *cohortes urbanae* and fleet troops were moved out to their own bases (see below). Inside the *castra* were also shrines, store buildings, and water-supply facilities (*Historia Augusta*, *Maximus and Balbinus* 10.4–8; Bruun 1987). In the space between the south-west walls and the “Servian Wall” was a great open exercise field, the *campus cohortium praetorianorum* (Tac. *Ann.* 12.36; Plin. *HN* 3.67; Juv. 16.25–6; Cass. Dio 74.1; Herodian 2.13.3; SHA *Did. Iul.* 5.9; Durry 1938, 54–6; Busch 2011, 25, 36–7; *LTUR* 1, 254).

The praetorians’ duties included escorting the emperor and members of his family during public activities in the capital (religious ceremonial, senate meetings, law courts, games), attending him in more private contexts (palaces and villas, dining), guarding his residences, accompanying him and his relatives on journeys, and protecting his person on the battlefield (Durry 1938, 274–80; Passerini 1939, 211–12; Millar 1977, 61–4; Campbell 1984, 111–13; Fuhrmann 2011, 124; Busch 2011, 22–8). The *praetoriani* also acted as couriers and fulfilled other special duties, such as burning debt records, making arrests and carrying out executions. Perennially the praetorians

protected the emperor from assassination attempts, coups and other hazards (e.g. Tac. *Ann.* 1.13, 16.27; Herodian 1.10.5–7). A full *cohors praetoria* was stationed in the Palatine palace complex, its daily rotation perhaps not requiring that it had dedicated accommodation (none has been clearly identified). Here, and on many public occasions when appropriate, soldiers wore the toga of a citizen rather than going fully armed. The enfolding toga had the great virtue of presenting a “civic” appearance while enabling the soldier to carry a sword unobtrusively (Tac. *Ann.* 12.69, 16.27; *Hist.* 1.24, 38; Suet. *Otho* 4; Mart. 6. 76). They were equipped for war with armor, curved shield, short sword and javelins (*pila*), in the manner of legionary troops. In addition, it seems that after the Aurelian Wall was constructed the closed system of gates and wall-walks was controlled by the troops in the *castra praetoria* (Dey 2011, 115).

Horseguards

Augustus retained a cavalry formation, perhaps around 500 strong, drawn from German barbarians (Bellen 1981; Speidel 1984). These *Germani corporis custodes*, or “*Batavi*,” attended the Julio-Claudian emperors in their residences, fulfilling much the same bodyguard duties as the praetorians. They were warriors personally attached to their emperor and thus formed an unquestionably loyal counterbalance to the Praetorian Guard. This was shown clearly when Gaius was assassinated and the *Batavi* went wild looking for the killers (Joseph. *AJ* 19.149–52; Suet. *Calig.* 58.3; Cass. Dio 30.1.1; Bellen 1981, 95–6). They were accommodated on the right bank of the Tiber by the *horti Dollabellae*, a remote location politically analogous with that of the later *castra praetoria* (Suet. *Galb.* 12.2; Bellen 1981, 56–7, 94; Speidel 1994b, 17–18, 29; Busch 2011, 94; *LTUR* 3, 58). The sensitive politicocultural nature of these troops led to their being temporarily banished from Rome in the aftermath of the 9 CE Varian disaster in Germany (Suet. *Aug.* 49). Loyalty to the dynasty led to their disbandment in 68 CE (Suet. *Galb.* 12.2). This meant that emperors from Galba to Nerva relied solely on the Guard and were vulnerable to pressure, as when praetorians, stirred up by the *praefectus praetorio* Casperius Aelianus, burst in on Nerva with drawn weapons and extorted the surrender of Domitian’s murderers (Cass. Dio 68.3.3–5; Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 11; Grainger 2002, 95).

Trajan created his own Horseguard. It was not drawn directly from barbarian tribes but from the non-citizen auxiliaries of the Lower Rhine army, which was his power-base. The *equites singulares Augusti* (“chosen horsemen of the emperor”) formed a body 1,000 strong (Speidel 1965; 1994a; 1994b). Collectively, and informally, they were also known as *Batavi* (“The Batavians”), reflecting their original recruitment from Lower Rhine tribes, and

linking them conceptually with the Julio-Claudian Horseguard. During the second century the origins of the men became more diverse, with strong emphasis on promoted Danubian auxiliaries, but the epithet remained (Speidel 1994b, 39, 62). Urban rioting in the Antonine period saw provincial *peregrini* set against Italian citizen troops as the latter backed the plebs against the Horseguard (Herodian 1.12.5–9; Cass. Dio 73.13.4–5). Under Severus the *equites singulares* were doubled in size to around 2,000 as part of this emperor's restructuring of metropolitan forces (Speidel 1965, 14–15; 1994a, 24; 1994b, 57–60). This Horseguard was dissolved by Constantine.²

Trajan's Horseguard was accommodated first in the *castra (priora) equitum singularium* on the Caelian Hill. This base is little known from excavation but some buildings, including shrines, have been investigated. Much better understood is the second installation, the *castra nova equitum singularium*, constructed to the south by Severus on land that was part of the Lateran estate which had been imperial property since the time of Marcus Aurelius (SHA *M. Ant.* 1.7). Constantine built the cathedral church of S. Giovanni in Laterano over the later *castra*, thus preserving its buildings for modern excavation. The *castra* had a dedicated water supply and multistorey barrack blocks with massive, barrel-vaulted basements (Colini 1944, 314–17; Nash 1961–62, I, 214–18; Speidel 1994a, 28–9, 413; 1994b, 126–9, Pl. 13; Consalvi 1997; Liverani 1998, 6–16; Busch 2011, 72–83; *LTUR* 1, 246–8, Fig. 140–42; 4, 246–7; 5, 235). The dating of altars found in the *castra priora* make it clear that this base continued in occupation after the *castra nova equitum singularium* was founded, thus both existing in tandem. Between the two bases was a large exercise field, the *campus Martialis Caelimontanus* (Speidel 1994b, 114, 128; Consalvi 1997, 117–18; *LTUR* 1, 218). Together with the other Caelian installations (see below), *castra* and *campus* formed a veritable military quarter.

The Horseguards fulfilled similar functions to the praetorians as bodyguards and escorts to the emperor and his family, with an additional element of personal loyalty to the *princeps*. The apportioning of such duties between these horsed soldiers and the Praetorian cavalry is obscure. Mounted service made them particularly effective for employment in crowd control (e.g. Herodian 1.12.6–9; Cass. Dio 73.13.4–5). Unlike the Praetorian Guard, the Horseguard does not seem to have had a distinctive emblem.

Soldiers and the metropolis

Three military formations were present in Rome principally to aid administration and the maintenance of public order and safety in the metropolis. These were the *cohortes urbanae*, the *cohortes vigilum*, and detachments from the two imperial fleets (*classes*).

The three Augustan *cohortes urbanae* were numbered X–XII following on sequentially from the nine *cohortes praetoriae*. Placed under the *praefectus urbi* (Urban Prefect), a post of senatorial rank, they were Roman citizens, mainly recruited from Italy. Initially *cohortes* were 500 strong, and were temporarily raised to milliary size by Vitellius, in the manner of the praetorian formations. A fourth *cohors urbana* was added in the Flavian period. Again like the praetorian cohorts, it is probable that they were 1,000 strong under the Antonine emperors, and appear each to have had 1,500 men under Severus because Dio recorded them as a total of 6,000 soldiers in four divisions (Cass. Dio 55.24.6; Echols 1967–68; Freis 1967, 16–17, 38–42; Bérard 1988).

The *urbaniciani* were accommodated in the *castra praetoria* for the first two centuries of their existence, but were transferred to the custom-built *castra urbana* in *regio* VII either by Severus or Aurelian (Freis 1967, 16–18; Busch 2007, 324–5; 2011, 31, 94–5; *LTUR* 1, 255). Their functions included crowd control and maintaining public order, especially at entertainment venues. Augustus was praised for using troops, presumably drawn from the *cohortes urbanae*, to patrol the streets of the city during festivals to discourage the burglary of unattended properties (Suet. *Aug.* 43). However, it is unclear how far, if at all, they acted as a police force in the modern sense. The broadening of the legal competence of the *praefectus urbi* in the Severan period, to deal with public disturbances, runaways, burglary, arson, and market regulation, did not involve investigative policing (Robinson 1992, 183–95; Nippel 1995, 94–6; Fuhrmann 2011, 127, 131, 138, 209–10). Concentrated in one base, the urban cohorts were ill-deployed for such a role. Gravestone figures depict urban soldiers equipped in the same manner as praetorian and legionary troops (e.g. Amelung 1903, No. 137p, Pl. 28; Ohl 1931, No. 29; Franzoni, 1987, No. 9, 47–8; Busch 2011, Fig. 78–9), and the urban cohorts were occasionally used in warfare (Bérard 1988).

Augustus first instituted a fire-watch organization in 22 BCE with 600 slaves, administered first by the aediles, later by the *vicomagistri* (see also Patterson, Chapter 13 in this volume, and Aldrete, Chapter 17). This was in part a safeguard against the political threat posed formerly by the private fire-fighting organizations of the Late Republic (Cass. Dio 53.24.4–6, 54.2.4, 55.8.6–8). However, a major fire of 6 CE presumably revealed the inadequacy of prior arrangements (Robinson 1977; 1992, 106–10; Ramage 1983). A new, standing fire-watch force was established, organized in seven *cohortes vigilum*, each 500 strong, initially recruited from freedmen and all overseen by a *praefectus vigilum* of equestrian rank. After a comparatively short service the men gained citizenship. The *cohortes* may have been doubled in size in the Severan period, following a catastrophic fire in 191 CE (Cass. Dio 55.26.4; Baillie Reynolds 1926; Ramieri 1990; Speidel 1995; Sablayrolles 1996; Nippel 1995, 96–7; Busch 2007, n. 8; 2011, 169). Each *cohors* operated in two city *regiones*, with a single headquarters (*castra* or *statio*) in one of

them, and a substation (*excubitorium*) in each *regio*. One *statio* on the Caelian Hill (*regio* II) and one *excubitorium* across the Tiber (*regio* XIV) are known archaeologically (Rainbird 1986; Ramieri 1990, 18–26; Sablayrolles 1996, 245–89, Fig. 1; Busch 2011, 91–4; *LTUR* 1, 292–4). The *vigiles* were soldiers (*milites*) with military unit organization, dress, arms and standards (*vexilla*), as is demonstrated by the one surviving figural military gravestone (Amelung 1903, No. 128d; Coulston 2000, Fig. 5.7; Busch 2007, Fig. 8; 2011, Fig. 82; Töpfer 2011, 103–6). They were equipped with axes (*dolabra*), water-pumps, and artillery for clearing buildings. However, their main function was vigilant nocturnal patrolling of the streets to guard against fire-hazards, entering properties at threat and administering punishments when necessary. Once a major fire had taken hold there was little to be done beyond creating fire-breaks and other measures to limit spread. Although the *praefectus vigilum* was responsible for pursuing and arresting runaway slaves, it has been doubted that the *vigiles* were intended to function as an effective urban police force in the modern sense (*Digest* 1.15.4; Nippel 1995, 97; Fuhrmann 2011, 130–31, 143). Only on very unusual occasions were the *vigiles* deployed for crowd control, as a political counterweight to other troops, or as a military force *per se* (Suet. *Aug.* 25.2; Cass. Dio 58.9.2–6, 12.2; Joseph. *BJ* 4.645; Tac. *Hist.* 3.64.1, 69.1; De Visscher 1966).

It is not certain when marines (*classarii*) were first permanently stationed in Rome. They were drawn from the two imperial Mediterranean fleets based at Misenum on the Bay of Naples, and Ravenna at the head of the Adriatic. The men were non-citizens recruited from the Balkans and Egypt. They had a range of functions: to facilitate official communications across the empire; to transport emperors, their family members and officials; to facilitate *naumachia* (staged naval battles); and to operate the awnings (*velaria*) rigged over theatres and amphitheatres which shaded audiences from the sun (SHA *Comm.* 15.6; Lucr. 4.74–84; Durry 1938, 23–6; Starr 1941, 20–21; Kienast 1966, 75; Graefe 1979, 55–61; Reddé 1986, 451; 1995; Cariou 2009, 423–26; Fuhrmann 2011, 130). Fleet personnel may already have been present under Augustus to serve the growing number of theatres constructed in this period. *Classarii* apparently participated in the acclamation of Claudius in the *castra praetoria* in 41 CE (Joseph. *AJ* 19.253). Initially they were accommodated here, but later were located in two separate bases, the *castra Ravennatium* across the river in *regio* XIV (perhaps in the area of Piazza S. Maria in Trastevere), and the *castra Misenatium* in *regio* II near the Ludus Magnus (Starr 1941, 20, 23; Carettoni *et al.* 1960, Pl. XVII.6a; Kienast 1966, 74–5; Reddé 1986, 452–3; Cariou 2009, 87–99; Busch 2011, 95–6; *LTUR* 1, 248–9, 254–5; 5, 235). The former were directly associated with the *naumachia* nearby, the latter with the Flavian Amphitheatre (“Colosseum”). Indeed, the Misenum *classarii* were also near the various gladiatorial training schools and the *armamentarium* (Armoury) listed in the Regionaries and seen on the *Forma Urbis Romae* (Nordh 1949, 75.15; Carettoni *et al.* 1960, Pl. XVII.6a;

LTUR I, 126). All these would have required a level of military security. The *armamentarium* was probably used to store gladiatorial equipment and was raided by rioting citizens for arms to use against the praetorians in the third century (Herodian 7.11.7). Fleet troops were much valued for their engineering skills, and they were also stationed at the ports of Ostia and Puteoli (Suet. *Vesp.* 8.3). Gravestones depict *classarii* as armed with short swords, spears and oval shields (e.g. Bollini 1968, Fig. 23–4; Franzoni 1987, No. 44), the equivalent of auxiliary equipment, and they were on occasion used offensively in the field (e.g. *ILS* 509).

Other Soldiers in and Around Rome

Some degree of centralized army administration existed in Rome for the whole empire. Emperors were concerned with senior appointments to legions and auxiliary regiments. For political as much as financial reasons, regular and efficient pay for the soldiers was an essential priority of imperial government. The planning, logistical organization, and execution of campaigns beyond the frontiers must have originated in the capital, at least in the period when emperors were habitually resident there. The grant of citizen status to thousands of auxiliaries, honorably discharged after their full term of service, was carefully tracked through the issue of bronze *diplomata*, copies of which were posted up on the wall of the Temple of Minerva close to the (at present unlocated) Temple of Augustus in the Velabrum area (Goldsworthy 2007, 106–8; Rankov 2007, 51). In connection with these and other tasks, Rome hosted a floating population of *peregrini* seconded from the provincial armies, men well attested in the epigraphic record and with accommodation which has been located through excavations. Representatives of the armies also came to Rome for the celebration of formal triumphs.

The *castra peregrina* on the Caelian Hill housed provincial soldiers. Some barracks have been traced archaeologically, as has a finely preserved mithraeum under S. Stefano Rotondo (Baillie Reynolds 1923; Baillie Reynolds and Ashby 1923; Colini 1944, 237–53; Clauss 1973, 84–5; Lissi-Caronna 1986; Nelis-Clément 2000, 118–20; Busch 2011, 84–91; *LTUR* 1, 249–51, Fig. 143–44). Inscriptions make it clear that the *peregrini* were organized into *centuriae* under *centuriones* and included administrators for finances, logistics, and the masses of records generated by army administration (*cornicularii*, *frumentarii* etc.: Baillie Reynolds 1923; Sinnigen 1962; Clauss 1973; Paschoud 1983; Rankov 1990; Panciera 1994; Saddington 2008; Fuhrmann 2011, 130, 144). Amongst the altars found at S. Stefano was one dedicated to all the standards of the legions, and to Septimius Severus and

his sons (Tomei 2006, 1.135). This recalls the two columnar inscriptions found in Rome which listed all the legions of the empire in geographical order, first under Marcus Aurelius, later emended to include Severan creations (CIL 6.3492). This inclusive overview was echoed in major public complexes, such as Trajan's Forum (see below).

In addition to increasing the size of formations in Rome, Severus also stationed one of his three new legions, *legio II Parthica*, at Albanum, an imperial estate only 15 Roman miles (22.3 kilometers) down the Via Appia, three hours' march from the metropolis. The new legionary fortress is one of the best preserved in the empire (Herodian 3.13.4; Tortorici 1975; Chiarucci 2006). Although small at 240 × 438 meters (10.4 hectares), it almost certainly had multistorey barracks (Dr Alexandra Busch, personal communication). An extramural amphitheater was located to the north-east, and *thermae* were added by Caracalla to the south-west (SHA *M. Ant.* 2.7–8; Tortorici 1975, 94–110; Chiarucci 2006, 61–3). This location was as much intended for political control as it was for gaining a strong reserve of soldiers to accompany the emperor on campaign (Tortorici 1975; Balty and Van Rengen 1993). The cool, elevated site in the Alban Hills may have been considered more salubrious for the legion's predominantly Danubian personnel.

The Metropolitan Military Community

The massive concentration of soldiers in Rome had a profound influence on the metropolis. Exact figures are unknowable and modern estimates vary, but troop numbers escalated from about 8,000 under Augustus to around 31,500 under Severus, excluding the *legio* at Albanum (Coulston 2000, Fig. 5.8; Busch 2007, 315–17; 2011, Table 2; Fuhrmann 2011, 117–18). Depending on estimates for the overall city population, a minimum of one person in 125 was a soldier in Augustan Rome (broadly 1:100–125), one in 45 in the Severan metropolis (1:25–45).

The disposition of military formations around the city in a series of *castra* differed according to soldiers' statuses and functions. The citizen forces were kept in peripheral positions, outside the capital under Augustus, in the *castra praetoria* from Tiberius onwards. The barbarian Germans were across the river outside the *pomerium*. Similarly, Trajan and Severus developed bases for the non-citizen *equites singulares Augusti* on the Caelian. These were topographically inconvenient for the main tasks of protecting the emperor and controlling public disorder. However, they were all on the radial roads which led into the city's heart, so rapid response was less of an issue. On the other hand, the fleet troops were close to their tasks. Something of a military enclave developed on the Caelian with the *castra peregrina*, the two *castra equitum singularium* and accompanying *campus*. As with the *castra praetoria*

and the *campus cohortis praetorianorum*, these will have developed a cumulative local community of servants, slaves, families, and service population. The Baths of Caracalla and Baths of Diocletian may in part have been built as acts of imperial patronage with the occupants of nearby military installations in mind, as at Albanum. The functions and comparatively lowly status of the *vigiles* necessitated and allowed their distribution through the city's *regiones* in a very different fashion. Together, all these installations excite comparison with nineteenth-century cities, such as Dublin, Wien, and Warsaw, ringed by *caserme* which looked inwards at the metropolitan population, more than outwards at foreign enemies.³ This "military urban scape" of ancient Rome was remarked upon by contemporaries who saw the city virtually as one military camp (e.g. Cass. Dio 75.2.2–6; see Coulston 2000, 85–6; Sablayrolles 2001; Busch 2007, 318–25; 2011, 96–107).

Soldiers would have been seen marching across the city from their installations to their postings, daily back and forth in a body, 500–1,000 strong in the case of the Palatine *cohors praetoria*. Troops of cavalry likewise would have been a familiar sight riding through the streets. Individual *milites* were recognizable by clothing, hairstyles, equipment, staffs (*fustes*), physique, and body-language (Speidel 1993; Coulston 2004, 141–52). The gates, towers and walls of all the *castra* would have been visibly patrolled, and the clarions of brass trumpets would have echoed right across the city at regular intervals with the passage of military time. The sound of metal military equipment being used *en masse* would also have been characteristic when soldiers were not wearing togas. The jangling of armor and belt-fittings, horse-harness, and weapons was added to shouted orders and blaring horns. At all times the scrape of hob-nailed boots would have created a metallic accompaniment. The stink of men, horses and leather added olfactory signatures to visual and aural impact. Together these sights, sounds, and smells unmistakably heralded and marked the passage of soldiers.

The use of troops for crowd control at public events also gave them a high visual profile. More darkly, emperors sometimes set the soldiers on audiences to clear venues or to quell public disturbances in the wider city (e.g. Suet. *Tib.* 60; *Calig.* 26, 32; Tac. *Ann.* 12.43, 13.48, 14.45, 61, 15.46; Herodian 7.12.5; SHA *M. Ant.* 15.6; Nippel 1995, 91–4; Bingham 1999; Kelly 2007; Fuhrmann 2011, 127, 130). This was not a particularly efficient governmental response and one which could escalate to become very bloody indeed, especially if the metropolitan population became organized and armed, and if elements of the military joined in on the side of the rioters (as has been seen so tragically in modern contexts). Fighting in built-up areas (FIBUA) is a recognized specialization in modern armies, and the closely crammed, multistorey *insulae* of Rome would have been difficult to subdue, especially by "foreign" soldiers in the face of local knowledge and organization. Heavy terracotta roof-tiles were a potent weapon in the hands of civilians. Soldiers coming off worse in

such situations were reduced to firing buildings in order to clear them (Plut. *Mar.* 9.6; Herodian 1.12.8, 7.12.5–6; Barry 1996). Although unusual, such events seem to have marked a growing hostility between Rome's wider population and the soldiery, especially after the Severan reforms emphasized military recruitment outside Italy (Herodian 7.11–12; SHA *Maximini duo* 20.6; *Gord.* 22.7–9; *Maximus et Balbinus* 8–10; Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 35.6; Curran 2000, 29–35; Dey 2011, 112–13).

Emperors and the other agencies which created public monuments seem to have been circumspect in the presentation of military subjects. There are few surviving instances of soldiers appearing fully armed and armored in metropolitan sculpture, with some Flavian exceptions, before the Trajanic period. Soldiers with standards appear unarmored on the *adlocutio* coins initially issued under Gaius. The first major iconographic project to figure soldiers in full contemporary panoply, in large numbers, was Trajan's Column (Cichorius 1896–1900). The helical frieze on the latter was a great celebration of the army's achievements on the frontiers, not least winning the barbarian treasure expended to enhance the city through Trajanic patronage. However, a great deal of the detail, especially military standards and the depiction of unarmored praetorians attending the emperor, was explicitly drawn from soldiers in the capital (Töpfer 2011, 95–99, Pl. 20–21, 23–5, 27–31, 33–40, 42–4. Cf. Andreae 1979; Koeppl 1984, No. 7; Flower 2001). Trajan's Column was just one element of a huge complex which glorified not only imperial triumph and barbarian defeat, but also the totality of the Roman armies. The open *piazza* was surrounded by scores of gigantic Roman military standards, and from the surviving inscriptions it may be inferred that all the *legiones* of the empire were honored, not merely those which directly participated in Trajan's Dacian Wars (Packer 1997, 220–21, 426, Cat. No. 179; Fig. 61, Pl. 113.1; 2001, 61, Fig. 61). On both Trajan's Column and the Great Trajanic Frieze (reused on the Arch of Constantine) soldiers appear as skilled and virtuous agents of imperial conquest (Coarelli 2000; Leander Touati 1987). Soldiers were also represented to metropolitan audiences as carrying out imperial beneficence, as with the burning of debt records shown on the Chatsworth Relief and the Anaglypha Traiani, actions which took place in the Forum Romanum and the Forum of Trajan (Koeppl 1985, No. 8; 1986, No. 1. Cf. SHA *Hadr.* 7.6). Indeed, the latter became something of a shrine to the army, linked closely with Trajan's military achievements (Packer 2001, 187–91; Gros 2000). This new, high profile of the soldiery was emulated on successive commemorative monuments such as the Column of Marcus Aurelius, and the Arch of Severus in the Forum Romanum. The prominent role of soldiers in imperial ceremonial was clearly advertised in the funerary displays depicted on the base of the Column of Pius (Vogel 1973, Fig. 9, 15, 28–9).

Soldiers were particularly concerned to identify themselves as belonging to a

distinct community of military professionals, a tendency reinforced by the anonymizing pressures of the sprawling metropolis. Many ethnic, religious, professional, and provincial groups in Rome's population expressed their identities through emphasizing *origo*, regional background, domicile, and cult preferences, elements preserved through the epigraphic and iconographic record. Soldiers had the financial means to bring provincial modes of religious observance to Rome, and the many deities honored with votives by the Horseguards form a distinct corpus (Speidel 1994a, 28–93; 1994b, 140–44; Noy 2000, 20–22, 63–4, 212–23, 253; Busch 2011, 74–5). Soldiers also expressed identity, both of military profession and of regional origins, through their funerary practices. This has ensured them a marked prominence in the epigraphic and iconographic records, but also provides information of a wider community of fellow soldiers (*comilitones*), resident families, servants, slaves, and other dependents (Speidel 1985; 1989; 1994b, 134–37; Noy 2000, 69–72, 215–16; Coulston 2000, 94–6; 2004; 2007; Busch 2001; 2007, 332–8; 2011, 104–7, 156–8). There was some zoning of military burials around the outskirts of the metropolis. Praetorian cemeteries have been found along the Via Salaria, Via Cassia, and Via Nomentana, with some admixture of other soldiers (Durry 1938, 60–63; Busch 2011, 115–21). The *Germani corporis custodes* were buried along the Via Portuensis and Via Aurelia, while the *equites singulares Augusti* were concentrated in a cemetery on the Via Labicana (Bellen 1961, 62–3; Speidel 1994a, 2–3; 1994b, 25, 115, 157; Busch 2011, 127, 128–30; *LTUR* 1, 247). Many of the latter's gravestones were preserved by spoliation and reuse in the Christian complex of SS. Marcellino e Pietro. *Columbaria* for the Ravenna and Misenum *classarii* were located on the Via Aurelia and Via Appia respectively (Starr 1941, 20, 23; Bollini 1968, 134; Busch 2011, 141–2).

The conjunction of an ever-larger concentration of resident soldiers, provincial funerary practices, and the use of fine imported marbles for metropolitan sculpture, created the finest and most extensive corpus of figural military gravestones from any one place in the Roman empire. Interestingly, Julio-Claudian soldiers kept a comparatively low profile. Praetorian *stelae* were round-headed with a simple wreath, a style which was closely emulated by *Batavi* (Busch 2007, Fig. 6–7; 2011, Fig. 55–6, 69–70). This perhaps reflected the cultural assimilation of the latter but also the general sensitivity of advertising the presence of troops in the capital. However, during the later first to second centuries the Italian and provincial practice of depicting deceased soldiers on gravestones joined the metropolitan vogue for funerary altars, and spread to the *praetoriani*, *urbaniciani* and, in one surviving case, the *vigiles* (Amelung 1903, No. 137o–p, 128d, 163; Ohl 1931, No. 29; Coulston 2000, Fig. 5.7, 5.18; Busch 2007, Fig. 8). Contemporaneously, the new *equites singulares Augusti* imported Rhenish styles of gravestone with banquet scenes and horse-and-groom (*calo*) panels (e.g. Speidel 1994a, No. 80, 83–7, 110–17, 201–8; Busch 2011, Fig. 72–3). Later in the second century

and through the third century, they erected stones depicting the deceased hunting wild boar, very much in the style of Thracian rider-god reliefs from the Danubian region, but often attended by a *calo* (e.g. Speidel 1994a, No. 109, 136, 258, 525, 544, 591–2, 596–601; Coulston 2000, Fig. 5.21; Busch 2011, Fig. 72–3, Fig. 74. See Noy 2000, 190–91; Busch 2001; 2011, 147–58). After Severus's provincialization of Guard recruitment, the third century saw an influx of finely detailed full-figure gravestones which paid careful attention in the Danubian manner to military equipment as a definer of status (Coulston 2000, Fig. 5.3, 5.5–6, 5.17; Bishop and Coulston 2006, Fig. 94; Busch 2007, Fig. 9; 2011, Fig. 59–60, 65). These also spread to the Horseguards (Speidel 1994a, No. 528–37; 1994b, Pl. 9–10, 12, 14, 16; Busch 2011, Fig. 75–6).

Soldiers in Rome were one of the conduits along which provincial cultures contributed to the metropolis through such media as language, cult, and funerary practice. In particular, soldiers contributed very substantially to the cosmopolitan makeup of Rome's population. This was a two-way exchange. Not only did soldiers come to Rome, but they also thereafter toured the provinces through personal promotions and when escorting peripatetic emperors, such as Claudius, Domitian, Trajan, Hadrian, Marcus, and Severus (Dobson and Breeze 1969; Ricci 1994, 2000; Speidel 1994b, 146–51). In addition they had a significant economic impact on the city. As the highest-paid soldiers in the emperor's armies, both in regular *stipendia* and in periodic *donativa*, their expenditure extended beyond the normal needs of supply and entertainment to patronage of craftsmen for corporate projects, such as cult shrines and statuary, and personal religious and funerary dedications (Tac. *Ann.* 1.17; Cass. Dio 53.11.5, 55.23.1; Watson 1971; Campbell 1984, 162–4, 183, 186–98; Speidel 1995; Coulston 2000, 89–90).

Guide to Further Reading

For summaries of the organization and numbers of soldiers in Rome see Keppie 1984, Stambaugh 1988, Robinson 1992, Coulston 2000 and Busch 2011. For the Praetorian Guard Durry 1938 and Passerini 1939 remain standard works, but see now Bingham 2012. A short, popular introduction is provided by Rankov 1994. A very readable coverage of the Horseguards is Speidel 1994b. For the *cohortes urbanae* see Freis 1967, and for the *vigiles* there is Sablayrolles 1996. The very best treatment of installations and funerary practices is now Busch 2011.

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ENDNOTES

- 1 Throughout this chapter ‘Guard’ will be used to refer to the praetorian formations, and ‘Horseguard’ for the separate, wholly mounted units of *Batavi* and *equites singulares Augusti*.
- 2 The most prominent military ceremonial formations in Rome today are the *Guarda Svizzera*, the papal bodyguard infantry, established in 1506, and the presidential cavalry guard, the *Reggimento Corazzieri*. The latter had their origins in the sixteenth-century Savoyard royal guard, received their cuirasses in 1842 at Torino, were constituted in Firenze in 1868, and moved to Rome in 1871. They are an adjunct of the *Carabinieri*, which is itself traditionally a mounted police formation, so the presidential cuirassiers are not really a close equivalent to either the *equites singulares Augusti* or the *equites praetoriani*. Their *caserma* is in Via XX Settembre, only 350 meters from the Palazzo Quirinale.

3As distinct from the rings of outward-facing nineteenth-century forts around such cities as Portsmouth, Paris, Antwerp, Liège, Bucaresti, and Washington, DC. Seldom remarked upon in archaeological literature are the fifteen forts built around Rome between 1871 and 1891, all clearly traceable on *Google Earth*.

PART IV

THE URBAN INFRASTRUCTURE

CHAPTER NINE

Rivers, Roads, and Ports

Candace M. Rice

Commonly agreed to have had a population of a million people by the time of Augustus (Morley 1996, 33–9), Rome was the largest city in the ancient world (see Lo Cascio, [Chapter 6](#) this volume). Supplying it with essentials and luxuries required Rome's suppliers to draw extensively from not only its immediate hinterland but also from much of peninsular Italy and the wider provinces (see Geraci, [Chapter 10](#), and Evans, [Chapter 11](#), of this volume). An adequate infrastructure of transport systems was thus of utmost concern. This chapter explores this infrastructure in detail, considering the roads and sea-lanes, harbors, docks, wharves, and warehouses that provided the means by which the city of Rome was supplied.

Rome's Natural Setting

Rome was founded at the lowest bridgeable point of the Tiber River. The Tiber cut through the city, providing connections to the Mediterranean Sea and to inland regions, particularly to the north of Rome (see Map 2). The Tiber rises in the Apennines of Emilia-Romagna at Mount Fumaiolo at an elevation over 1,200 meters above sea level and flows for 406 kilometers through central Italy to Rome and then onwards to Ostia where it meets the Mediterranean (Campbell 2012, 309; Franconi 2013, 705). The Tiber's major tributaries are the Chiascio, Nera, and Anio (Aniene) on the right bank and the Nestore, Paglia, and Treja on the left. Of these, the Nera and the Anio are the longest, measuring 115 kilometers and 99 kilometers respectively, linking the towns of Terni and Tivoli with the Tiber valley. The Nera joins the Tiber just north of Otricoli (modern Otricoli), and the Anio north of Rome at Antemnae.

While without doubt a lifeline for the city's development and prosperity, the river also posed a continuous natural challenge. The modern Tiber River has a mean discharge at its mouth of 265 cubic meters per second, with strong seasonal variation between 30 cubic meters per second during winter and summer and over 300 cubic meters per second during spring and autumn (Gumiero *et al.* 2009). While these discharge rates are the result of modern interventions to control flooding along the Tiber, the extreme seasonal variability of the volume of the river would have been similar in antiquity and

would have had a considerable impact on the navigation of the Tiber as extremes of both low and high volumes would have made the river difficult to navigate.

North of Rome, the Tiber was navigable at least as far as the confluence of the Tiber and the Pallia (modern Paglia) near Orvieto. More northerly reaches of the Tiber probably were seasonally navigable, as referenced by Pliny the Younger in relation to his Tuscan villa (*Ep.* 5.6). Otricoli, located at the intersection of the Via Flaminia and the Tiber, was certainly an important transport hub to the north of Rome and substantial riverfront port structures have been uncovered there (Quilici 1985–6, 200–202). Travel downstream from Otricoli would have taken around 1½ to 2 days, depending on the season and water volume, while travel upstream from Rome would have taken considerably longer (around a week) and probably required rowing or towing. Additional ports north of Rome include those at Lucus Feroniae, Badia di Ponzano near Capena, and near Horta at Piscinale Amelia ad Orte (Campbell 2012, 315). These regions provided many goods to Rome, including foodstuffs, timber, bricks, and tiles. The travel time from the ports of the north downstream to Rome would have been faster than the journey from the Mediterranean to Rome, a fact which may well have influenced the types of products transported from the north (e.g. perishables).

Flooding along the lower reaches of the river was an annual problem in antiquity (Aldrete 2007; Keenan-Jones 2013). Little evidence remains with regard to official dealings with floods during the Republican period, though numerous extant *cippi* along the banks of the Tiber dating to 55 BCE record *curatores riparum* who would have been tasked with flood prevention and control along the Tiber (Aldrete 2007, 198; also Chapter 17 in this volume). By the imperial period, matters of the Tiber were dealt with by the *curatores riparum et alvei Tiberis*, who maintained offices at both Rome (*CIL* 6.12240) and Ostia (*CIL* 14.5384). In addition to handling floods, the curators were also in control of granting permission to build on the Tiber banks as well as boundary control between at least Rome and Ostia, though it is not known how far upstream the responsibilities of the curators extended (Aldrete 2007, 200).

Republican Rome

The connective infrastructure of the Republican period focused on the development of roads and riverine ports.

Roads

Indeed, in my opinion the three most magnificent works of Rome, in which the greatness of her empire is best seen, are the aqueducts, the paved roads and the construction of the sewers.

(Dion. Hal. Ant. Rom. 3.67.5)

The building of roads was an integral part of Roman expansion and an outlet for political display. Roads were crucial for communication and supply and were constructed according to certain specifications. In the Republican period, most roads were paved with compacted gravel, though the Via Appia was paved with stones during the Republic (Laurence 2013b, 296).

The major roads, or *viae*, out of Rome named in the written sources (*LTUR* 5, 133–41, s.v.) divide into two categories, those named for their destinations, and those for their builders. In order to be classed as a *via*, a road had to be wide enough for wheeled traffic, at least eight Roman feet wide on straight sections and 16 Roman feet wide on curves (Laurence 1999, 58).

Roads named for their destinations are the earliest and include the Via Salaria (salt road), leaving Rome to the north-east to end at Castrum Truentium 242 kilometers away and the Via Campana which extended from the Via Salaria through the Campus Salinarum Romanarum on the right bank of the Tiber below Rome. The Roman Via Salaria and Via Campana were built along existing routes that had been crucial for the prehistoric salt trade that predated the founding of Rome (Quilici 1990, 69, 89). Other roads led to early allies and colonies in Latium, such as the *Labicana* (to Labici), the *Tiburtina* (to Tibur), the *Nomentana* (to Nomentum), the *Ardeatina* (to Ardea), and the *Ostiensis* (to Ostia). The Via Latina was named for Latium in general. A much later road named for its destination was the Via Portuensis, presumably built during the first century CE to connect Rome with the new Claudian harbor at Portus.

Roads bearing family names (e.g. Appia, Aurelia, Cassia, Flaminia, Valeria) represent the expansion of Roman control over the rest of peninsular Italy in the course of the third and second centuries BCE. They served multiple destinations and their names are those of the censors or consuls who oversaw the contracts for their construction out of public funds. The first and most famous is the Via Appia, built in 312 BCE by Appius Claudius Caecus. The Via Appia is often regarded as the true beginning of Roman road construction because of its historical, political and technological significance. (Quilici 2008, 553). The technical achievements of the road are perhaps best illustrated by the extreme straightness of the road between Rome and Terracina, a stretch of nearly 90 kilometers (Quilici 2008, 554).

A series of bridges and ferries connected the roads across the left and right

banks of the river within the city of Rome. In particular, the Pons Sublicius, Pons Aemilius, and Pons Mulvius connected with major extraurban roads (Taylor 2002, 1). Tradition holds that the wooden Pons Sublicius was the first bridge built over the Tiber. Livy describes its location as downstream from the Tiber Island (Livy 1.33.6); the exact location remains unknown but it connected to the Via Salaria. The Pons Aemilius was built in the second century BCE in close proximity to the Pons Sublicius to relieve part of the traffic burden from the smaller Sublicius; it connected with the Via Aurelia. The Pons Mulvius was in the north of Rome and carried the Via Flaminia. Several other bridges, such as those that connected the banks of the Tiber to the Tiber Island (Pons Fabricius, Pons Cestius), served the more local, day-to-day traffic that was ubiquitous throughout the city.

Ports of Republican Rome

Our understanding of port installations within the city of Rome, particularly during the Republican period, is limited as the Tiber banks were excavated during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; much was uncovered and little was recorded. We do know, however, that the major port installations of the Republican period were located on the left bank of the Tiber near the Tiber Island.

Portus Tiberinus and the Emporium

The Portus Tiberinus, located on the left bank of the Tiber between the Forum Holitorium and the Forum Boarium, is generally considered to be the earliest port area of Rome. It was commissioned in 179 BCE by the censor Marcus Fulvius Nobilior. Fulvius also commissioned the piers for the Pons Aemilius (whose arches were completed in stone in 142 BCE) (Livy 40.51.4) and it has been suggested that the connection between these two building projects could be due to the need for a large enough bridge to allow for the passing of merchant ships (Colini 1980, 45–6). Varro recorded the location of the port when discussing the festival of Portunus on 17 August: “*Portunalia dicta a Portuno, cui eo die aedes in portu Tiberino facta et feriae institutae*” – “The Portunalia was named from Portunus to whom, on that day, a temple was built at the port on the Tiber, and a holiday instituted.” (Varro *Ling.* VI.19, Loeb Translation, adapted). The Portunus temple is plausibly identified as that still standing near the approach to the Pons Aemilius, but Trajanic renovations have obscured all traces of the earlier Portus Tiberinus towards which it faced.

Another Republican port facility was probably located between the Portus Tiberinus and the Emporium, but is known only from Livy (35. 10. 12), who

records the construction of a *porticus* outside the Porta Trigemina (location unknown) and an *emporium* (marketplace) beside the Tiber, by the aediles of 193 BCE M. Aemilius Lepidus and L. Aemilius Paullus. In 174 BCE, the censors added stone paving to the *emporium*, fencing it off with posts and building stairs which led up to it from the river (Livy 41. 27. 8). While these structures are often regarded as part of the Emporium, the identification is not secure as the location of the Porta Trigemina is unknown. It is probable that this *emporium* was located in the area between the gates of the Circus Maximus and the north-west corner of the Aventine (Harmansah 2002, 118), rather than the area farther downstream traditionally called the Emporium (see below). The port facilities may have been close to the Pons Sublicius – whose position is equally uncertain but was possibly about 400 meters upstream from the modern Ponte Sublicio (see Tucci 2004, fig. 5).

Part of the confusion regarding the location of the structures described by Livy is the identification of a structure located in the securely identified Emporium area as the Porticus Aemilia. At a distance of about 80 meters from the present riverbank lay the north end of a vast vaulted structure in concrete, 487 meters long and 60 meters deep, still standing almost to roof height in places towards its southern end. The building dates from the later second or early first century BCE and is customarily identified as a rebuilding of the Porticus Aemilia mentioned by Livy but has recently been reinterpreted (on the basis of a new reading of a fragmentary inscription on the Severan Marble Plan) as *navalia* – monumental shipsheds for warships (Cozza and Tucci 2006). If this is correct, there must once have been a harbor basin of equivalent size in front of it, where the ships could be maneuvered in and out of the sheds. The building seems to have been converted to commercial use by the end of the first century BCE.

On the waterfront near the northern end of the Porticus Aemilia / Navalia, a Republican wharf of squared tufa blocks with a small staircase and a travertine mooring ring in the shape of a boar's head were discovered (Meneghini 1985, 162). The area of the Emporium was also characterized by numerous large horrea such as the Horrea Galbana (late second century BCE) and the Horrea Lolliana (c. late first century BCE).

Ostia

Ostia was the primary riverine port of Republican Rome, located approximately 35 kilometers downstream at the estuary of the Tiber. Founded as a *castrum* in the fourth century BCE, Ostia's initial function was defensive and by the Second Punic War, it was Rome's principal naval base (Meiggs 1973, 20–27). While commercial trade surely passed through the city's river harbor during this time, it was not until the second century BCE that Ostia's

prime function changed to that of a commercial port (Meiggs 1973, 27).

The harbor structures at Ostia are, for the most part, not well known. Ostia never had a harbor on the Mediterranean and all facilities were located on the Tiber (Heinzelmann and Martin 2002, 5). Nothing remains today of the wharves, which must have still been visible during the late nineteenth century as Lanciani records that they were composed of a solid wall which in turn formed the back of warehouses. He notes that the warehouses had large openings about nine feet above water level, which he attributes to the height of the decks of the large trading ships (Lanciani 1876, 15). These would have been located along the left bank, backing the warehouses of Regio I.

Between 1996 and 2001 a program of intensive geophysical survey complemented by aerial photography analysis and test excavations was carried out by the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut and the American Academy in Rome (Martin *et al.* 2002). The results doubled the size of the city, and also shed light on the harbor structures. In the northwest part of Regio III, between Tor Boacicana (the supposed lighthouse) and the Palazzo Imperiale, a harbor basin cut into the left bank of the Tiber, just upstream of the river mouth. The full delineation of the basin could not be determined, but it appears to have measured approximately 100 × 160–180 meters (Heinzelmann and Martin 2002). On the eastern side was a temple raised on vaulted substructures, interpreted as shipsheds (*navalia*) (Heinzelmann and Martin 2002, 9).

Subsequent geo-archaeological research by a Franco-Italian team has confirmed the existence of the basin (Goiran *et al.* 2014). In its earliest stages, between the fourth and second centuries BCE, it had a depth of c. 6 meters below sea level that would have allowed even the largest ships to dock. Siltation was, however, a significant and recurring problem. Cores indicate that the harbor basin was dredged in an attempt to maintain depth, though it was ultimately unsuccessful; between the first century BCE and 25 CE, the harbor basin had silted to such a degree that it was abandoned (Goiran *et al.* 2014, 395).

A wharf (Santa Maria Scrinari 1984) and a warehouse (Zevi 1972) have also been discovered on the right bank of the Tiber at Ostia, suggesting that the right bank was also dedicated to commercial facilities. The minimum total wharf length at Ostia has been calculated as c. 1.2 kilometers (Keay 2012b).

During the Republican period and until the construction of Portus after 46 CE, Puteoli on the Bay of Naples functioned as the main maritime port for Rome, handling goods such as grain. Grain was shipped first to Puteoli where it was transhipped into smaller boats to sail along the coast to Ostia and in some cases also up the Tiber to Rome.

Once ships docked at the harbors of Ostia, and later Portus (discussed below), the cargoes destined for Rome had to be transported up the Tiber. Dionysius

of Halicarnassus reports that boats of up to three thousand measures burden could be rowed or towed up to Rome, whereas cargoes from larger ships were transshipped into river boats (*Ant. Rom.* 3.44) and towed to Rome by men or oxen along a towpath located on the western bank of the Tiber. Examples of *caudicariae*, vessels that were used in coastal zones and rivers, have been found at Fiumicino (Boetto 2001) and at Pisa (Bruni 2000) (Camilli and Setari 2005). Moving against the flow of the river, it would have taken approximately three days to tow a ship up to Rome (Rickman 1988, 259). A colossal statue of the Tiber, found in Rome but now in the Louvre, bears a relief of men towing ships up the Tiber on its plinth (Le Gall 1944, 39–52, figs 2–7; Casson 1965).

Imperial Rome

As the population of Rome grew, so did the need for supplies. By the end of the Republican period and certainly by the time of Augustus, the infrastructure of Rome was insufficient. Clothes, building supplies, and staple and luxury goods were imported into Rome on an unprecedented scale and yet Rome had extremely limited access to the Mediterranean. From 207 to 31 BCE at least 37 food shortages are attested and a further ten are documented just during the reign of Augustus (Mattingly and Aldrete 2000, 143). While improvements to the supply infrastructure did not solve the problem completely, it did help and between Augustus and Septimius Severus only a further 13 shortages were recorded (Mattingly and Aldrete 2000, 143).

By the end of the first century BCE, Rome had expanded well beyond its Republican (so-called Servian) walls of the fourth century BCE, whose original circuit is estimated at 7.5 miles (11 kilometers), but exactly where the city boundaries lay is not known. While the major roads servicing Rome were Republican in origin, their importance remained paramount for the empire and the gravel surfaces were often repaved with large stones (Laurence 2013b, 296). The quarrying, transport, and laying of the huge basalt blocks that constituted their paving required considerable investment (Laurence 1999, 62), but the result was an extremely durable pavement that facilitated ease of movement and communication for centuries after construction. The Milliarium Aureum, or Golden Milestone, a monumental milestone which marked the point at which all major roads leading into Rome met (Plut. *Galb.* 24.4), was erected in the Forum Romanum by Augustus in 20 BCE in his role as *curator viarum* (commissioner of the city's roads) (Cass. Dio 54.8.4). The milestone, a column clad in gilded sheet bronze, was inscribed with the names of all the principal cities of the empire and their respective distances from Rome.

If we are to trust figures provided by Pliny for the later first century CE (*HN*

3.66), Rome measured 13.4 Roman miles (19.85 kilometers) in circumference and had 37 gates, including 12 double gates, counted only once. Single road entrances are assumed where there was a single gate, while a double gate signaled the entry of two separate roads to the city, potentially allowing for some 49 roads radiating out from the city by Pliny's day. Pliny provides the frustrating information that if one added up the distances from the golden milestone to each gate, the total would be 20 miles 765 paces (c. 30.7 kilometers), whereas if one were to measure to the end of the built-up area the total would be 70 miles (104 kilometers). Interestingly, his figure for the circuit of the city in his day almost matches that of the Aurelian Walls (271–276 CE), which still stand for most of their length (13 miles/19 kilometers). These had only 16 gates, less than half Pliny's number, no doubt for defensive reasons, but a number of the Aurelianic gates have proven to have had early imperial predecessors on or near the same spot (e.g. Tiburtina, Appia, Praenestina-Latina).

It was the port installations, however, that underwent the most significant changes in the imperial period. By the second century CE, these extended nearly continuously along both sides of the river for approximately two kilometers (Castagnoli 1980, 35). Fragments of the Severan Marble Plan and numerous discoveries made when the modern embankments were constructed in the late nineteenth century show that wharves, harbors, landing steps, and jetties lined both banks of the Tiber above and below the city. Throughout the imperial period, port areas developed for particular commodities, equipped with specialized warehousing and dedicated sales areas.

Portus Tiberinus

Significant renovations were carried out at the Portus Tiberinus under Trajan on a scale that obscured all previous phases reflecting both the need for all available harbor space in Rome, as well as the continued importance of the port site. The major changes involved the construction of a higher embankment in an effort to prevent flood waters inundating the port area, as well as the installation of a *horrea* complex (Colini 1980, 46–9).

Emporium

By the Trajanic period, the Emporium facilities stretched for approximately one kilometer along the left bank of the Tiber, south-west of the Aventine Hill, between the modern Ponte Sublicio and Ponte Testaccio. Three distinct wharf areas have been identified, each roughly 250 meters in length (Meneghini 1985, 162). The furthest upstream of these areas runs beneath and

upstream of the Ponte Sublicio and consists of a series of rooms in *opus reticulatum* and a narrow concrete wharf. This is the location of the Republican wharf with the boar's head mooring ring mentioned above (Meneghini 1985, 162). Farther downstream, fragments of a 130-meter long wharf and associated storerooms were excavated in 1952 and 1979–84 and are preserved today as an open archaeological site. The first phase of building was perhaps Flavian and consisted of a three-storey brick storeroom divided into small single units (*tabernae*); a wooden wharf probably connected this structure to the Tiber from the middle floor (Meneghini 1985, 162). Under Trajan additional rooms were added in *opus mixtum*, along with the wharf. The wharf, 5 meters high and 10 meters wide, paved with travertine, was a solid artificial bank reinforced with series of parallel concrete walls placed at right angles to the river, its front wall set at a slight incline and anchored to a solid concrete platform set in the river bed. This structure seems to have been for the unloading and distribution of goods shipped up the river from Ostia and Portus. It seems unlikely that it was used for long-term storage as the area is prone to dampness. During the fifth century CE the *tabernae* filled up to second-storey height with rubbish and were used for inhumations in the sixth century (Meneghini 1985, 163).

The area of the Emporium in front of the southern end of the Porticus Aemilia / Navalia, is traditionally known as the Marmorata (“marble-district”) as considerable quantities of ancient marble were found scattered across the Tiber bank in this area. Excavations between 1868 and 1870 designed to retrieve marble for papal building projects also found numerous port remains including two levels of landing stages in front of a high embankment wall with a small dock at the downstream end, all of Trajanic date. Long double ramps joined the lower level landings to the upper, where the landing platforms connected with wide entrances set in the upper embankment wall. Also discovered were 1238 marble blocks and columns and over 10,000 sawn plaques. No actual excavation records were kept, though limited notes were recorded by Bruzza and later published by Gatti (1936).

Quarry marks transcribed with varying degrees of reliability by Bruzza indicate that the marble finds date predominantly to the first two centuries CE; Neronian and Flavian period marks comprise 61 % of the dated quarry marks and those of Hadrianic date 33.3 % There are strikingly few Trajanic-period marks (only 2.5 %), perhaps due to the Trajanic construction of wharves and ramps in the area (Gatti 1936, 80) which would have necessitated another location for the storage of the marble during this time. The significance of this is uncertain, since the pattern (and date) of deposition of the assemblage in relation to the port installations is not known, but it has been noted that in the marble yards at Portus (see below) the majority of dated quarry marks are Hadrianic (30 %) and Antonine (45 %) (Maischberger 1997: 51; Fant 2001: 173), suggesting a switch in use away from the Marmorata at least

temporarily, while the dock facilities were renewed. Alternative yards appear to have developed at this time on the Campus Martius (for the huge Trajanic building projects in that part of the city, for which an older wooden mole at Tor di Nona was replaced in stone (see below). The Marmorata wharves perhaps continued to function into the early Middle Ages when an extension to the Aurelian Wall was built to enclose the wharves under Leo IV following the Saracen invasion of 846 CE (Meneghini 1985, 163).

Some 250 meters further downstream, alongside the Horrea Lolliana (identified from frag. 25 of the Severan Marble Plan and some limited excavation) was a wharf measuring c. 80 meters in length and 15 meters in width (Meneghini 1985, 163). While the Marble Plan does not show the wharf connecting to the Horrea Lolliana, it is proposed that it would have connected with an upper floor, as in the first area of the Emporium discussed above (Meneghini 1985, 163).

Campus Martius

Port installations were also constructed along the banks of the Campus Martius. Quays have been located at Tor di Nona (Quilici 1987; Maischberger 1997, 100–104), Piazza Nicosia, and Ripetta, but little is known about these structures due to a lack of recording during their excavation in the nineteenth century (Keay 2012b, 36).

A tariff inscription (*CIL* 6.1785 = 31931), found at San Silvestro in Capite and dating from the late third or early fourth century is associated with the sampling and transport of casks (*cupae*) of wine brought into the city for the *vina fiscalia*, a public wine ration introduced by the emperor Aurelian (*SHA*. 3.48.4). The wine was stored in (and distributed from) the porticus of the Temple of Sol built by Aurelian in 274 CE on the east side of the Via Lata, just beyond the Ara Pacis. It was carried there by *falancarii* from a place called *Ciconiae* (“The Storks”), which is also listed in the regionary catalogues for Region IX as *Ciconias* together with *Nixas*. These have been read as a single toponym (“Straining Storks”) and might thus refer to dockside cranes (Rougé 1957), but *Nixae*, like *Ciconiae* is also a toponym attested separately.

It is proposed that the port was located on the left bank of the Tiber upstream of the Pons Aelius (Ponte Elio), at Tor di Nona, where a mole 13.7 meters wide and over 50 meters long, built of solid Anio tuff capped with travertine set at an angle of 40° to the current was discovered in 1890 (see Maischberger 1997, 100–104, figs 49–51), anchored to the river bed by a massive concrete footing. The mole was initially believed to be associated with the shipment of marble (Marchetti 1891) and although this has been doubted on the grounds that no quarry state blocks have been recorded in its vicinity (Maischberger

1997, 104), the imperial marble yards of the Campus Martius, to the west of the stadium of Domitian (Piazza Navona), do lie directly to the south – it is the closest point of river access to the area.

A circular foundation 4.90 meters in diameter set in the center of the mole could be the footing of a large crane. After the building of the Mausoleum of Hadrian and the Pons Aelius (completed early in the reign of Antoninus Pius), the mole may no longer have served for the delivery of marble, but continued in use as a port for other goods. Elements from a circular marble temple of the wine-god Bacchus probably dating from the later third century (Marchetti 1891, disputed by Maischberger 1997, 103), although not found in situ, could represent its later adaptation to the Portus Vinarius.

Transtiberim Installations

Very little is known of harbor installations on the right bank of the Tiber, but evidence from the Severan Marble Plan (fragments 27 and 28) suggests that the area was densely built-up with warehouses, and it is probable that river docking facilities existed. In particular, the area may have been devoted to the wine trade.

Docking space has been discovered on the right bank to the south of the Tiber Island, across from the Portus Tiberinus. Here, a wall was discovered in 1870 with three travertine corbels carved as lion heads with holes to function as mooring rings. Excavations in a garden above the wharf in 1871 discovered the remains of a *horrea* and assorted other structures. These were connected to the wharf by stairs (Tucci 2004, 197).

Cellae Vinariae Novae et Arruntiana

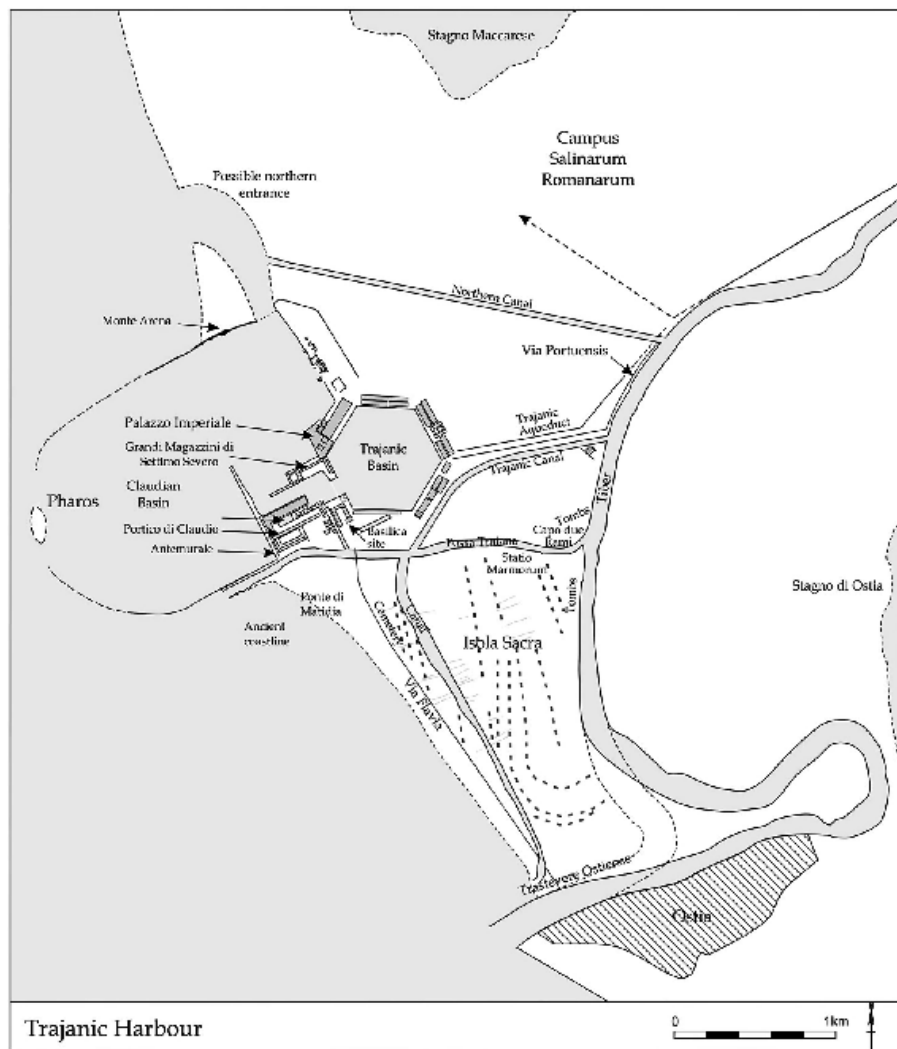
The Cellae Vinariae Novea et Arruntiana were located near the Ponte Sisto and the Villa Farnesina in Trastevere. Discovered and partially excavated between 1878 and 1880 (Fiorelli 1880, 127–8; 140–41), the structure has been identified as an imperial wine storehouse. The warehouse is dated to 102 CE by an inscription identifying it as the *schola* of the traders of the Cellae Vinariae (CIL 6.8826). While no harbor facilities were discovered, it seems likely that they would have existed due to the location of the warehouse so near the banks of the Tiber. The warehouse contained the remains of rows of sunken dolia, similar in form to warehouses known at Ostia, Marseilles, and Lattes used for storing wine. The building was demolished to make way for the Aurelian Wall and the Vinaria Novae wharf was built to replace it, just inside the wall.

Portus Vinarius

The presence of the Portus Vinarius is attested in three inscriptions (*CIL* 6. 9189, 9190, 37809), connected with *negotiatores* and *coactores* (merchants and dealers). The Portus Vinarius seems to have been a district of the Tiber dedicated to the wine trade, but its exact location is unknown. It has been proposed plausibly that it was on the right bank of the Tiber, near the Cellae Vinariae Novae et Arruntiana (Peña 1999, 11–12) and also perhaps near the Cella Civicihana warehouse and the Septem Caesares district (Holleran 2012, 79), two areas associated with the wine trade.

Portus

While the port infrastructure within the city of Rome underwent significant improvements over the course of the imperial period, particularly under Trajan, (Map 8) arguably the most substantial improvement to Rome's connectivity came with the construction of Rome's first proper maritime harbor, Portus, begun in 42 CE under Claudius and dedicated under Nero in 64 CE. The new facilities at Portus were composed of numerous elements including an outer, Claudian harbor, a lighthouse, an inner hexagonal Trajanic basin, several canals, including the Fossa Traiana (actually Claudian despite its name), an aqueduct, cisterns, *horrea*, an amphitheater, and the so-called "Imperial Palace". The initial construction was the Claudian basin, a c. 200 hectare, 7-meter deep harbor enclosed by two westward-projecting moles. A lighthouse stood at the center of the harbor entrance (Keay 2012b, 44). Numerous warehouses date to the Claudian period; while these comprise only a small proportion of the warehouses when compared with those of later date, the Claudian warehouses alone occupied more space than the total of such structures at Ostia (Keay *et al.* 2005, 300). A smaller rectangular basin, the so-called Darsena, enclosing an area of 1.07 hectares at a depth of 3.5 meters, was constructed in 117–118 CE (Keay 2012b, Note 63). The Fossa Traiana, a canal linking Portus to both the Tiber and the Mediterranean, was built under Claudius to facilitate access from the sea. Another canal, the Northern Canal, linked the Tiber to the Mediterranean north of the Claudian harbor (Keay *et al.* 2014, fig. 12).



Map 8 Trajanic Harbor at Portus.

(From Keay *et al.* 2014, Figure 12).

The most significant improvements to the harbor system at Portus occurred under Trajan with the construction of the Trajanic basin, a hexagonal basin excavated inland of the Claudian harbor. The basin, five meters in depth, enclosed an area of 32 hectares (Keay *et al.* 2005, 282). Taken together, the three basins enclosed an area of c. 233 hectares, with nearly 14 kilometers of wharf length (Keay 2012b, 44). Warehouses of varying functions lined five of the six sides of the hexagon and there was a rectangular temple opposite the entrance (Keay 2012b, 46–7). The south-eastern side of the hexagon is particularly interesting; the warehouses are bounded on their eastern side by the so-called Trajanic Canal, a 35 meter wide canal with a minimum draught of 4.34 meters that runs from the Fossa Traiana to the Tiber (Salomon *et al.*

2014), enabling cargoes from seagoing ships to be unloaded directly into the warehouse for storage before being transshipped onto river barges for travel up the Tiber (Salomon *et al.* 2014, 43). Another canal, measuring 90 meters across at its northern end and 20 meters across at its southern end, branched off the Fossa Traiana to the south and connected Portus with the Tiber at Ostia. The Trajanic construction significantly increased the number of warehouses at Portus and it is estimated that by the early second century, warehouses occupied over 92,000 square meters (Keay *et al.* 2005, Table 9.1). As a result, the capacity of warehouse space at Portus was more than three times that of Ostia (Keay *et al.* 2005 310).

The construction of the Trajanic harbor was partially in response to the inadequacies of the Claudian harbor (Meiggs 1973, 161–2; Rickman 1988, 258–9), most strikingly illustrated by the sinking of 200 ships by a single storm in the harbor in 62 CE (Tac. *Ann.* 15.18.3), though the archaeological evidence indicates clearly that the Claudian basin continued to be used alongside the Trajanic basin (Keay *et al.* 2005). It should also be remembered that while the main function of Portus was to provide adequate infrastructure to ensure supplies for the city of Rome, it also served as a redistribution center for products from across the Roman world. Certainly the widespread distribution of African Red Slip ware is best explained as having travelled with grain ships and being redistributed out of Portus (Bonifay 2003; Fentress *et al.* 2004, 157–8) and it is probable that other products were distributed in a similar manner.

The relationship between Ostia and Portus is not entirely understood, though the sites clearly served different purposes. This is most prominently illustrated by the scale of the harbor infrastructure and quantity of warehouses at Portus as compared with Ostia. The river harbor at Ostia would not have been adequate for large sea-going merchantmen while those at Portus were designed to handle considerable amounts of traffic and large ships. At the present state of excavation, it appears that the population of Portus was small (rough estimates place the population between 11,000 and 17,000) and that the city had relatively little in the way of residential housing and amenities (Keay 2012, 48). Ostia, on the other hand, was replete with such buildings. To some degree, this suggests that those who worked at Portus relied on Ostia for food, lodging, and shopping, perhaps commuting between Ostia and Portus along the canals or the Via Flavia (Map 8). Moreover, it seems likely that Ostia functioned as the preferred location for business transactions. Numerous guilds relating to trade are attested epigraphically, exemplified by the so-called Piazzale delle Corporazione, an area of *stationes*, or offices, for corporations of shippers from Africa, Gaul, and Sardinia, where trading contracts could be arranged (Rice 2016, 106–7; Terpstra 2013, 100–112).

Until recently it was thought that Ostia's role as a transshipment center for goods destined for riverine transport to Rome continued even after the

construction of Portus, because the quantity of warehousing at Ostia far exceeded what was necessary for a city of its size. However, in the light of the greater size of Ostia revealed through the recent geophysical research discussed above, coupled with the city's limited harbor facilities and limited evidence for habitation at Portus, Keay (2012, 43) argues that Ostia expanded in symbiosis with Portus. According to this scenario, the riverine harbor of Ostia was connected with the supply of Rome not through the direct handling of cargo, but rather through the administration of trade and commerce between Rome and the Mediterranean. Ostia, therefore, maintained a significant population related to the supply of Rome, a population which itself required supply and therefore extensive warehouses.

In addition to the major construction at Portus, and the previously discussed construction and renovation of port facilities in Rome itself, Trajan also built a major seaport at Centumcellae to the north of Rome (Plin. *Ep.* 6.31).

Guide to Further Reading

Tiber: Le Gall (1953 French edition or the 2005 Italian translation) remains the fundamental study of the role of the Tiber in the city's development. Tuck (2013) provides a brief overview in English. Campbell (2012) discusses a number of rivers across the Roman world, and has a dedicated section on the Tiber.

Roads: The starting point for roads in Italy is Laurence (1999). For Rome in particular, see Laurence (2013a and 2013b). Quilici (2008) concentrates on the technological aspects of road building.

Harbors and Ports: For harbors in general see Blackman (2008) which includes an overview of classical harbors and past bibliography. There is no comprehensive publication of the river ports in Rome in English, though Keay 2012b contains a very useful summary. Very few overviews exist even in Italian. Castagnoli (1980) is the most concise starting point.

Ostia: The standard publication is *Roman Ostia* by Russell Meiggs (1973). While parts of this work have been superseded by recent archaeological discoveries, it is still the best and most comprehensive account of the city. For more recent excavations, Martin *et al.* (2002) and Heinzelmann and Martin (2002) provide a useful starting point. For commercial facilities, see DeLaine (2005). The website, Ostia – Harbor City of Rome, www.ostia-antica.org, is an excellent and accessible resource.

Portus: The bibliography on Portus is expanding rapidly as the site is currently being excavated. Keay *et al.* (2005) contains the initial survey report. Keay

and Paroli (2011) and Keay (2012a) contains the published results of the excavations, as well as various papers on the wider topic of Roman ports.

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CHAPTER TEN

Feeding Rome: The Grain Supply

Giovanni Geraci

(translated by Claire Holleran)

The word *annona* in Ancient Rome signified the supply and storage of food necessary for the survival of the city, principally grain, oil, and wine, although until the third century CE, the involvement of the state was limited to grain and, to a lesser extent, oil.¹ In 123 BCE, Gaius Gracchus passed a law which guaranteed the provision of grain to citizens in Rome at a fixed price (*frumentationes*), leading to the construction of the public granaries in the city (*Sempronia horrea*: Festus 370L.; cf. Plut. *C. Gracch.* 6.3). *Annona* then means the entire procedure for enabling the survival of the city through food supplies, while *frumentationes* (Virlovvet 1995; 2009) means only the reduced-price (later free) grain distributions: it is vital not to confuse the two things. Before 123 BCE, the food supply had been the concern of the aediles, but in an occasional, rather than an institutional sense. They monitored the situation and intervened in the case of emergencies, using their overseas contacts.² For example, an inscription thought to date to 129 BCE preserves a decree of the people of Thessaly for the dispatch of c. 3,225 tons of grain to Rome, enacted in response to a personal appeal from the aedile Q. Caecilius Metellus, because Rome's local crops had failed (*SEG* 34 1984, 558).³ It should be noted that although the Thessalian grain was made available, it was sold not given,⁴ and private ship-owners had to be paid for its transportation. After Gracchus, we should also note the *lex frumentaria* of the tribune of the Plebs P. Clodius Pulcher (58 BCE), which introduced a sort of general guardianship for the supply, entrusted initially to one of his associates; the guardianship of the *annona* conferred on Pompey for five years in 57 BCE; and the project of *lex alimentaria* proposed in 50 BCE by the tribune of the Plebs, C. Scribonius Curio (see Rotondi 1912, 398, 402–3, 412–13; Virlovvet 2000a, 111–12; 2003, 63–5).

Population Growth and “Grain Psychosis”

In antiquity, the ideal model was one of self-sufficiency (*autarkeia*): a city should not depend on external resources and even less on provisioning from afar or from overseas.⁵ However, imbalanced population growth pushed ancient cities in the opposite direction, often leading to the institution of a

state-sponsored *annona*.⁶ Between the age of the Gracchi and that of Augustus, when the *annona* was consolidated into a permanent service (6–7 CE), the population of Rome grew to an unprecedented size. Although estimates of Rome’s population have often been divergent, a figure of around 1,000,000–1,200,000 inhabitants for the first two centuries of the empire is now generally accepted, an order of magnitude that was not reached again until the modern era (see Lo Cascio, [Chapter 6](#) in this volume).⁷

When the state (and the emperor) assumed the burden of supplying a capital of such large dimensions with essential foodstuffs, they had to take into account not only numbers, but also political, psychological, and emotional factors. Firstly, there is a difference between the stable population of a city and the non-residents who visit out of necessity or interest, or to use its markets for their supplies. Secondly in all great cities, ancient and modern, there is the fear of running out of basic food, or Rome’s case, “grain psychosis,” as I have defined it elsewhere (Geraci [2003](#), 629). The *annona* had, therefore, to ensure that foodstuffs were stored at Rome in quantities well beyond the maximum level implied by the population, sufficient to combat any emergency; an eventual surplus could then be sold once new provisions had arrived, if no longer needed as a reserve.

Rome and Overseas Grain

Prior to the conquest of Egypt by Octavian in 30 BCE, Rome’s principal sources of grain (tributary or fiscal) lay overseas in Sicily, Sardinia, and Africa. However, the transport from these three provinces had always appeared insecure, so long-distance supply by sea never became organized on a regular basis. It was preferred that the grain from a province such as Asia, for example, should remain in the hands of contractors, who paid the state money instead.⁸

A polemic against the need for external supplies, which radically contradicts the ideal of self-sufficiency, is found already in Varro (*Rust.* 2. Pref.3), our earliest reference to the theme: “Since the heads of families... having abandoned the sickle and the plough... would rather occupy their hands in the theatre and in the circus than in the grain-fields and the vineyards, we hire people to bring us grain to fill our stomachs from Africa and Sardinia, and with ships we store the harvest of the islands of Cos and Chios” (cf.

Columella *Rust.* 1. Pref. 20; see Tchernia and Viviers [2000](#), 761–801, on Rome esp. 768–71, 779–81). The passage can be dated to about 37–36 BCE, which explains why Sicily is not mentioned, due to its being in the hands of Sextus Pompey at the time (Sirks [1991](#), 25; Marasco [1992](#), 651–60; Geraci [2003](#), 629–30). Rome’s dependence on supplies from overseas was of major concern in a period punctuated by naval blockades and threats to isolate and

starve the city and the peninsula. This sense of vulnerability is still evident in a famous message of Tiberius to the senate, reported by Tacitus (*Ann.* 3.54), and his story of a riotous crowd surrounding Claudius in the Forum during a food shortage (*Ann.* 12.43).⁹

Logistics

The coast of Latium had no natural harbors.¹⁰ Ostia, at the river's mouth, acted as Rome's main maritime port (see Rice, [Chapter 9](#) in this volume) for a long time, alongside the river harbor on the Tiber. In the second century BCE, however, as the volume of grain imported by sea and the size of the ships that carried it increased, the bulk transport switched to the port of Puteoli on the Bay of Naples, around 200 kilometers away, where cargoes would be transferred to smaller vessels. Adverse sailing conditions generally closed the sea routes to Italy during the winter months, permitting Rome only five months of the year, June to October, in which to amass sufficient stocks to last for the following seven (Cass. Dio 60.11.1–2; Strabo 5.3.5; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 3.44.1–2).¹¹ This imbalance gave rise to a tendency to over-provide in case of emergencies, as the distances involved made it near-impossible to handle situations of urgency. It was an innovation of Augustus to make the flow of grain from the tributary provinces both regular and annual, integrating it with a system of purchasing supplies as needed.

Fame urgere and Egyptian grain

The importance of Egypt to the grain supply of Rome, and, indeed, the whole of Italy, is clear from Suetonius's life of Augustus (*Aug.* 18.12; echoed in *Epit. de Caes.* 1.4–6; for further discussion, see Geraci [2003](#), 625–90). Tacitus and Dio go so far as to suggest that the need for grain was among the causes that prompted Octavian to bring the province under the direct control of an imperial prefect. A hostile governor could have starved Italy: *fame urgere Italiam* (Tac. *Ann.* 2.59; cf. Tac. *Hist.* 1.11; Cass. Dio 51.17.1). Some scholars consider such an explanation to be anachronistic, a retrojection of a later situation (e.g. Joseph. *BJ* 4. 605–10; Tac. *Hist.* 3.48), arguing that in 30 BCE Rome could not have been more dependent on Egyptian grain than on Sicilian, Sardinian, or African grain (see, among others, Brunt [1983](#), 61–2; Reinhold [1988](#), 140). Nevertheless, the threat of starvation in Rome and Italy prompted by the late-Republican blockading of supplies could potentially have motivated Octavian. On the eve of the war between Caesar and Pompey, Cicero wrote to Atticus (*Att.* 9.9.2: 17 March 49 BCE) that it would be a

mortal conflict which would start with famine, overflowing with such cruelty that the contenders could not hesitate to strangle Rome with hunger. An entire fleet was prepared to block off the passage to Italy and to occupy the grain-producing provinces (cf. also *Att.* 9.7.4; 13th March 49 BCE). According to Appian (*B Civ.* 1.67.69), an earlier blockade by Gaius Marius had stopped the passage of food by river from the sea and from upstream, and the neighboring towns where grain was stored for Rome, Antium, Aricia, Lanuvium, and others, had been attacked. Piracy could also pose a threat to the food supply of Rome (App. *Mith.* 93), as did the actions of Sextus Pompey (App. *B Civ.* 5.67; cf. Cass. Dio 48.18.1; 31.1). Octavian was thus able to convince a world emerging from the insecurity of civil war and food shortages that the grain of Egypt was as crucial to the restoration of peace as the security of the seas, and that only he could guarantee this new state of prosperity (Pavis D'Escurac 1976, 292; and see Suet. *Aug.* 98.2; Philo *Leg.* 143–51).

Imports v. Consumption. The Question of Wastage

According to the *Epitome de Caesaribus* (1.6), in the Augustan era, Egypt sent 20 million *modii* of wheat to Rome each year (c. 130,000–140,000 tons, if a *modius*¹² = 6.5–7 kilograms). This figure is usually doubted because, when taken together with a passage in Josephus (*BJ* 2.386) saying that Egyptian grain fed Rome for only four months of the year, it would mean the annual requirement was 60,000,000 *modii* (c. 400,000 tons), which seems excessive.¹³ Before dismissing such a figure out of hand,¹⁴ however, we should note that it refers to the amount *imported*,¹⁵ not necessarily the amounts distributed, let alone the amount actually consumed (Garnsey and Saller 1989, 101–4). The difference between the first and the other volumes could be considerable, depending on the rate of deterioration of the cereal. Relative humidity and temperature are critical for the safe, long-term storage of grain. If the moisture content is kept below 15 % at temperatures between 15 and 30 degrees centigrade it is possible to conserve grain more or less intact for 1 to 6 months; on the other hand, at the same temperature, if the moisture content rises above 15 %, storage cannot be prolonged for more than a few days, since the grain starts to ferment. Damp grain also breeds infestations of parasites and mold, which can then contaminate other grain.¹⁶ More difficult for us today is to evaluate the conditions in terms of moisture and temperature of grains imported from overseas with trips lasting up to one or two months (Casson 1971, 297–8; Rickman 1980a, 128–29, 233; Arnaud 2005).

In antiquity the best system to preserve grain was to store it in underground silos or in storage buildings constructed with elevated floors.¹⁷ Usually placed in storage at the hottest time of year, it could only be kept cool by natural

methods, that is, by the earth or by ventilation (Cato, *Agr.* 92; Plin. *HN* 18.303; Vitruvius, *De Arch.* 6.6.4; also I. 4.1–2). Early Latin agronomists recommended sealed pits as the only way to prevent contamination, but none have yet been found in the archaeological record around Rome. In granaries used for temporary transit storage, at Puteoli and Ostia and also in the city itself, the grain was often stored simply in sacks, with ventilation from outside.¹⁸ In this “mixed” storage system (see Virloeuve 2011, 7–21), the grain was subject to constant movement, involving different types of storage for the same amount of grain. This seriously impacted on the rate of loss, which still reaches its highest level in the phase between the grain being unloaded from ships and its final use as food (as bread, as a sort of porridge, etc.). The situation is not, however, analogous with the present day, which entails uninterrupted storage in airtight containers. In a sealed space, filled to the maximum, the cereal absorbs the little oxygen available and emits carbon dioxide, which impedes the survival of bacteria and vermin (Rickman 1980a, 21, 134; Dupré 1991, 207). However, if the container becomes partially empty, or is repeatedly opened due to repeated withdrawals, the concentration of carbon dioxide decreases to below the necessary level. Furthermore, if warehouses are not perfectly airtight (as Roman *horrea* almost never were), it becomes very difficult to guarantee the maximum degree of humidity between 14 % and 16 %, and in a Mediterranean climate it is easy to reach a dangerous level of 22 %. Grain was also frequently moved, stored in granaries, transported to other areas, gathered in new granaries, and then distributed; it is in this period – the practical conditions of use and retail – that most loss occurs.

In the Mediterranean climate of the ancient world, the loss often reached 25 % of the total product, increasing as far as 33 % in “long term” and “mixed” storage.¹⁹ An importation equal to 60,000,000 *modii* could, therefore, involve a loss of between 15,000,000 and 20,000,000 of *modii*, and such amounts could in practice decrease to 45,000,000 or 40,000,000 *modii* for distribution (Tchernia 2000, 756; Geraci 2003, 636), after which the percentage spoiled usually becomes still higher.

An awareness that stored grain could reach a high percentage of deterioration is demonstrated in the ancient sources (cf. Marasco 2001, 25–36; Geraci 2003, 637–39). Pliny the Elder, for example, presents evidence of the particular structural vulnerability of wheat (*HN* 18.304; cf. Palladius 1.6.7). Pliny the Younger acknowledges that the accumulated harvest was “destined to rot in our warehouses” (*Pan.* 29.1 and 3–5), while Seneca observes that grain could be damaged by the dishonesty or neglect of transporters, as well as by heat and humidity (*De brevitate vitae* 19.1). Care against the infestation of insects and parasites in grain stored in warehouses is also confirmed in the ancient sources, particularly the agronomists (Cato *Agr.* 92; Varro, *Rust.* 1.63; Columella, *Rust.* 1.6.15–17; cf. Plin. *HN.* 18.302; Palladius 1.19.3; *Geoponica*

2.27.10). Tacitus reports that Nero had grain that had deteriorated thrown into the Tiber (*Ann.* 15.18.2), and two measures in the Theodosian Code (11.14.1: 364 or 365 CE; 15.1.12: 364 CE) clearly mention the existence of major damage to the grain stored in the state granaries.

Illness caused by the toxic effects of rotten grain was sufficiently frequent to induce Galen to discuss the issue (*De differentiis febrium* 1.4 (7.285 K); Lieber 1979, 332–45; Garnsey 1999, 38; Marasco 2001, 33–5). Furthermore, grain found in the excavations at Herculaneum demonstrates that in the few months that had elapsed between the harvest and the eruption of Vesuvius (the hypothesis that grain is still left from the previous August appears improbable), a serious infestation of insects and parasites had occurred.²⁰ It is probable that this relates to domestic storage of grain (Monteix 2008, 123–38).

Vitruvius draws attention to the danger of fire in granaries (*De Arch.* 6.6.5), while Plutarch highlights the issue of floods in Rome (Plut. *Otho* 4.10). Shipwrecks and fires on ships that had already arrived at Rome were also a possibility: Tacitus (*Ann.* 15.18.2) relates that under the principate of Nero, “the price of grain was not at all increased, although almost 200 ships were destroyed in the port by a violent storm and 100 others, which had sailed up the Tiber, by a random fire.”

The Granaries at Rome

Based on the *horrea* of Ostia, where the ratio between the storage spaces and service zones, such as stairs and corridors, is around three to two, it is possible to estimate the total surface area that might be needed in Rome to store 400,000 tons of grain (for a general survey on where the granaries in Rome and the surrounding area were located, and also on the form of each of them, see mainly Rickman 1971; cf. also Virlouvet 1995). To allow for ventilation and the cooling of cereal, it is necessary to accumulate grain in piles that are not too high, so if we assume a height not exceeding 1.20–1.30 meters (equivalent to a ton of weight per meter), each pile covering 1.5 square meters, this results in a storage area of c. 500,000 square meters (so Marasco 1988, 37–8; Galsterer 1990, 32–3; Galsterer 1993, 103; further considerations in Rickman 2002, 359–62); if we assume heights of almost 2.50 meters (as Hermansen 1981, 228), this would obviously reduce the space required by more or less half.

The possibility of storage in sacks should also be considered and a passage of Appian (*B Civ.* 1.69) attests that (in the first century BCE at least) not all the grain destined for Rome was stored in the city: when Gaius Marius and Cinna

carried out the blockade of the capital, they initially seized the surrounding centers (Anzio, Aricia, Lanuvium, etc.) “where was amassed the grain for Rome.”

The study of the granaries of Rome, Ostia, Portus, Pompeii, Herculaneum, the Byzantine world, the Anatolian peninsula, Africa, and the rest of Italy and of Europe has led to important clarification on grain preservation methods in various climates and latitudes. The most noticeable novelty, however, comes from the granaries of Karanis in Egypt, where there are different storage systems side by side in the same building, fulfilling diverse underlying needs and using different techniques of conservation, resulting in different rates of loss (Geraci 2008, 307–22). It is not sensible to think that Karanis represents a typological exception inapplicable to Rome (Curtis 2001, 335): Egypt has less of a problem with humidity than other areas, but the overheating of grain was certainly more intense.

The excavation of Karanis has revealed the floor plan and the elevation of a large number of granaries, in many cases as far as the third floor, which were spread around the village; while some can certainly be considered public, others were probably for private use.²¹ It is possible to see the coexistence in the same building of “the mixed typology of preservation” with basement rooms and underground rooms (*siri*), vaulted rooms (*camarae*) that are overlapping so as to support the weight of grain and of other collection facilities, and warehouses of open or closed cells, with or without roofs.²² Similar granaries have been found at Bakchias, demonstrating the wide distribution of this structural type within Egypt (see Tassinari 2007, 35–44; Tassinari 2009). Interesting parallels can be drawn with the granaries at Rome and Ostia, allowing an idea of how rooms were perhaps also arranged in elevation (Curtis 2001, 335). The result is a composite system of many storage and transit facilities in which the grain moves in rotation from one to the other. This is of fundamental importance for both the calculation of the surface area that Rome must assign for the storage of grain, and for any estimate of the different percentage of deterioration of cereal, even inside the same building.

What does “Rome” mean?

Another element to consider is the size of the area supported by the *annona* of Rome, given the increasing presence in the city of people who did not live there permanently, such as occasional visitors, people of smaller neighboring centers, members of embassies and diplomatic missions, and tourists, in addition to the more permanent residents, officials, personnel of the state and military.²³ Cicero wrote in a letter from Tusculum to Atticus at Rome (14.3.1) that his builders (*structores*) had left in search of grain but had returned

empty-handed, relating the rumor that “at Rome all the grain was carried to the house of Anthony. A false alarm, without doubt: in fact you would have written to me.” Are they citizens of Rome or of Tusculum? Did they go to Rome (as Garnsey 1988, 202 claims), or Tusculum for supplies? In any case, a relationship between the lack of grain at Tusculum and the affairs in Rome appear evident. Epictetus then informs us that one of the tasks of the Prefect of the *annona* was to receive petitions of people: “I pray you to allow me to take away a little grain” (Epictetus 1.10.10; cf. Garnsey 1988, 253; 256). “To take away” where? Outside Rome? Are these sales of public grain to people of the capital or are they, more plausibly, for true exportation and proper gains maybe from the sale of the supplies?²⁴

Fiscal Grain or not? The Role of the Private Market

Tight controls on grain seem to be attested by Polybius (28.2.5; 16.8–9) in relation to Sicily in the Republican era: it was the senate who granted Rhodes the right to take away 100,000 *medimni* of grain from the island. The issue is to determine whether that grain was fiscal grain (the only grain suitable to meet the needs quickly and in bulk), or if the senate was able to dispose of the entire grain product of Sicily.

The latter possibility would appear to be contradicted by Cicero in *De domo sua* (5.11; cf. 10.25), who complained that the grain-supplying provinces (among which he notes Sicily) “did not have grain, or it was sent to other areas – evidently according to the capricious mood of the sellers – or it was held tightly closed in their granaries to send at the approach of the new harvest, as if they would be more entitled to our gratitude if the help arrived in the middle of famine.”²⁵ Traces of this commercial traffic remain in the sources, clearly demonstrating the existence of a private market in grain not run by the state (see now Tchernia 2011)

Cicero (*Fam.* 13.75) asked the legate Titus Tattius for facilities for the exportation of grain to one of his protégés, Gaius Avianius Flaccus.²⁶ Augustus, after considering abolishing the grain distributions – allowing some people not to buy at all, or to buy less grain on the private market – preferred to regulate them in order to reconcile the interests of the farmers, the traders, and the people of Rome.²⁷ Tiberius reacted to a rise in the cost of grain by fixing the maximum price to be paid and guaranteeing compensation to the sellers (*Tac. Ann.* 2.87).²⁸ Philostratus, in his *Life of Apollonius of Tyana* (1.15), placed the famous episode of grain merchants speculating in Aspendos in Pamphylia in the Tiberian era.²⁹ Apollonius had found the Pamphylian town oppressed by scarcity: vetches were being sold in the market, “because the rich held the grain under lock and key for export and sale outside of the country.” The *lex Julia de annona* was concerned with hoarding by

speculators and the damage done to the *annona* from private entrepreneurs,³⁰ and Claudius, to entice merchants and private shipowners to participate in the supply and transport of grain to the city, issued measures in their favor (Gaius, *Inst.* 1.32; Suet. *Claud.* 18–9).³¹ The notion of a “fair price” in the food market appears also in Pliny the Younger’s *Panegyric to Trajan* (29.5): “Hence the food supply, hence the *annona*, the prices are agreed between seller and buyer, hence the abundance in the city without there being hunger elsewhere.”³² Daily retail purchases were explicitly referred to by Tacitus (*Hist.* 4.38): “since the winter impeded shipping, the crowd, being accustomed to buy their food day by day and having no other interest in the state apart from the grain supply, believed in their fear that the ports had been closed and the supplies held back....”³³

It is clear then that the role of the *annona* was granting an unbroken presence of sufficient amounts of grain to be sold on the city market at a fair price. It is worth noting that the state’s free distributions (*frumentationes*) never covered more than a third of the urban population at the most, and could be considered only as a form of political charity, having also the aim of limiting the potential for an unsustainably high demand of grain, which would have involved an increase of prices on the market (see Tchernia 2011, 140–41).

The most compelling evidence for the existence of a non-state market for grain is found in the Pompeian tablets in the archive of the Sulpici, which attest to notable quantities of Alexandrian wheat (*triticum Alexandrinum*) in private ownership in the Puteolian *horrea* in around 40 CE.³⁴ The possibility that this refers to grain of fiscal origin, later sold by the state, cannot be excluded (although given the time of year – Mid-march to the end of June – this appears unlikely), but it is unclear, since the specification “Alexandrian” no doubt refers only to the type and the quality of the seeds, as clearly attested by Pliny the Elder (*HN* 18.66–8).

It seems too cumbersome that in each case of purchase of grain for free disposal, the authorities or the emperor himself issued export licenses to individual merchants. The approval to export grain from the province of Egypt to Judaea and the communities of Greece and Asia (though in many cases, no prior permission is mentioned in the sources), is explained more easily if we assume that they relate not to the entire production of the country, but to the tax grain accumulated at Alexandria, after deduction of the share of supply reserved for Rome and for the Alexandrian *annona*, which only the emperor could remit (see, for all, Plin. *Pan.* 30–31).

Included in this context should also be mentioned an inscription that conserves part of a letter addressed to the Ephesians by an emperor in the second century CE (unknown, but usually identified as Hadrian):³⁵ “...it is clear that you will make use of such an agreement wisely, keeping in mind that it is essential in the first place that the imperial city has an abundance of grain available for the market and provided from everywhere, and that then

also the other cities are similarly supplied according to their needs. If then it will be evident that the Nile, as we wish, will give the flood in the usual way and plentiful grain will be produced for the Egyptians, you will be among the first after the fatherland..." (IvE 2.211).³⁶ It is clear that the imperial decision was made at a time when it was not yet possible for anybody to forecast the future Egyptian harvest; I therefore find it obvious that the request of the Ephesians pertains to the fiscal grain, the only grain which was conveniently accessible in large quantities, meaning that they were not compelled to look around for a sufficient quantity of grain on the numerous free markets and also be subjected to the variety of their prices. For the rest, alongside the inscriptions in which the imperial permission is expressly underlined,³⁷ there are as many in which no control is mentioned at all.³⁸

A similar interpretation can be made of Josephus's comment that in 24 BCE the Prefect of Egypt, Publius Petronius, gave permission to Herod 'to take away the grain first, in every way helping in the purchase and the transportation' (Joseph. AJ. 15.307).³⁹ The case above recalls what Epictetus said about one of the usual offices of the prefect of the *annona* at Rome, which was to receive requests of permission to take away grain, obviously from that of the state (Wörrle 1971, 337).

Ships and "Grain of the Sea"

In a famous letter (*Ep.* 77. 1–3) Seneca describes the year's first appearance of the grain fleet from Egypt approaching Puteoli, preceded by the ships called *tabellariae*, which signalled the imminent arrival of the grain ships.⁴⁰ The letter is usually assigned to the first half of June 64 CE.⁴¹ Rougé, rightly questioning the idea of a state grain fleet, has suggested giving *classis* the meaning of "convoy."⁴² This is the origin of the idea that the grain ships initially reached Italy in a large convoy in late spring. A second convoy was then made up of ships that had wintered in Italy, and which, by leaving Italy in April, would have been able to reach Alexandria in May, returning to Rome laden with grain in August, before returning again to Alexandria before the winter closure of the sea. A third and final convoy would have been made up of the same ships that had arrived in Italy in the late spring, which returned to Alexandria and set off loaded with grain for Rome, passing the winter in Italy (Casson 1971, 297–9).

Technical considerations alone, however, should cause us to reject the hypothesis of the large convoys. If one accepts the figure of 60,000,000 *modii* as the total quantity of grain carried to Rome by sea, it would take about 1,200 large transport ships of 5,000 *modii* (350 tons) each, and around 3,000 boats to go up the Tiber as far as Rome.⁴³ The fleet destined for the Puteoli–Ostia rotation must have then exceeded the consistency of 200 boats of 100 to 150

tons gross tonnage.⁴⁴ They need two days to go by sea from Puteoli to Ostia, three days to go up the Tiber, at least four or five days to load and as many to unload a vessel of 150 tons, and a half day to go back down the river on the current: a rotation Puteoli–Ostia was therefore not possible in less than a fortnight, and the simultaneous arrival of a single convoy of hundreds of ships at Puteoli would inevitably have led the system to collapse. The same can be said when Portus was completely operational (without, it seems, obliterating the function of Puteoli): the logistical problems that would have been generated by the simultaneous arrival of such a large number of vessels, and the operation of unloading and loading cargo from heavy ships to smaller boats, verifying the condition of grain, and the time required for the transfer of the sacks, would remain unchanged. Moreover, a large convoy is not easy to navigate: those who travelled in the Mediterranean in successive eras tended to sail in groups of not more than five to ten ships (Geraci 2003, 644; Tchernia 2003b, 618).

Besides, it is not at all evident in our sources that *classis* (or, in Greek sources, *stolos*) must allude to a “single, large convoy”; rather the sources suggest that the term *classis* refers to a mercantile grain “fleet,” not so much a state body, but a complex of vessels (travelling together or not) dedicated to this type of activity.⁴⁵ It therefore seems evident that the entire period suitable for shipping was characterized in summer by a continuous coming and going of small and medium groups of transport ships.⁴⁶

An Egyptian document of 374 CE testifies that almost two thousand *artabai* of grain (around 9,000 *modii* or c. 60 tons) had been received and registered in the imperial granaries of Alexandria already by the 10 April.⁴⁷ If the data can be extended to the preceding centuries, it is possible to think that from April, or at least from the middle of May, the first ships left Egypt and reached Rome in not less than a month.⁴⁸

The “Best Grain”

In his *De brevitae vitae* (18.5; 19.1), addressed to his father-in-law Pompeius Paulinus, prefect of the *annona* between 49 and 55 CE, Seneca exhorts him to flee the existence of a statesman and stops to outline the main tasks relating to the control of the grain supply: “You have to do with the stomach of men... Do you think that it is just the same whether you are concerned in having the grain deposited in the granaries without being damaged by the fraud of the transporters and by negligence, in seeing that absorbing moisture it did not deteriorate and did not ferment, that it corresponds to the measure and the weight?”⁴⁹

A well-known Berlin papyrus of the second or third century CE can help to

clarify the understanding of the system's operation (there are no earlier documents concerning this aspect: *BGU* I. 27; *Sel. Pap.* I. 113; Chrest. Wilck. 445); this document states that the grain ships were at Ostia on 30 June, had finished unloading on 12 July, their crew had gone to Rome on 19 July, and were still in the capital on 2 August, waiting for a letter of dismissal (*dimissoria*).⁵⁰

A passage in the *Digest* (48.11.7.2) sheds some light on the matter: according to the *lex Julia repetundarum*, magistrates in charge of the collection of the public grain supply were obligated not to release any of the grain received until it had been subject to verification (*probatio*). This can be compared to the *Actio secunda in Verrem*, in which Cicero reproaches Verres for his behavior towards the provincial grain collections, abusing his rights as governor to approve or disapprove (*probare* or *improbare*) the provisions of the state. The long-awaited *dimissoria* of the Berlin papyrus would therefore have been released only when the administration of the prefect of the *annona* had terminated the operation of *probatio* of the grain transported.

The assessment of the condition and the quality of the cereal is well documented and is usually conducted through the use of *deigmata*.⁵¹ These appear as samples of the load, mostly sealed. The equivalent of *deigma* in the Latin sources is *exemplum* or *exemplar*, as can be deduced from a comparison of Greek and Latin sources. Plutarch's *Life of Demosthenes* (23.6), for example, states: "as we see the merchants (*emporoi*) when they carry around a sample (*deigma*) in a small jar, with a few grains to sell a large quantity...." A close parallel is *Rhet. Her.* (4.9): "It is as if a merchant selling purple or some other commodity should say: 'Buy of me, but I shall borrow from someone else a sample of this to show you.' So do these very people who offer merchandise for sale go in search of a sample of it elsewhere; they say: 'We have piles of wheat,' but have not a handful of grain to show as a sample" (Loeb translation; cf. Gofas 1970, 57).

Two *deigmata* inscriptions are conserved from Egypt. The first is a leather bag (Gueraud 1933, 62–4 and photos), which bears a Latin inscription in ink: "Sample (*exemplar*) of barley sent through the pilot Chaeremon, Son of Anubion, from the nome Memphites to the metropolis." The second (Gueraud 1950, 107–15 and photo; SB 6 9223) is a small cylindrical container of baked red clay, 14.5 centimeters high with an internal diameter of 14.5 cm, a flared upper rim and an overall diameter of 17 centimeters. The container has a Greek inscription in ink:

...Ammonios, son of Ammonios, pilot of a public vessel with the emblem A... under the escort of the load supervisor (*epiploos*) Lucius Oclatius, soldier of the XXII legion, second cohort, century of Maximus Stoltius, and Hermias, son of Petalos, pilot of another ship of which the emblem is Egypt, under the escort of the load supervisor (*epiploos*) Lucius Castricius,

soldier of the XXII legion, 4th cohort, century of Titus Pompeius. This is the sample (*deigma*) of the load that we have received in the delivery from the harvest of the year 28 of Caesar (Augustus)... The year 29 of Caesar (Augustus), 4 of Hathy (1 November 2 BCE). [2nd hand]: I Hermias and I Ammonius have sealed the sample. The year 29 of Caesar (Augustus), 19 of Hathy (16 November 2 BCE).

Other *deigmata* for grain have come to light at Pompeii and Marseille. The *deigmata* from Pompeii are on amphorae, one of which, measuring 26 centimeters, bears in ink the writing “Sample sent of 25,200 *modii* of grain,”⁵² and the other, “Sample sent in advance of the corn loaded in the ship of”⁵³ The *deigma* from Marseille, which is missing the neck and the upper part of the handles, is also on an amphora, with a maximum conserved height of 25.3 centimeters, and a width of 12.1 centimeters,⁵⁴ with a painted inscription in ink, related to the shipping to Marseille of 15,000 *modii* of “barley from the country of Cavares.”

The use of *deigmata* at Rome is well certified in the Theodosian Code, which mentions them as concealed instruments of control (*clandestinum... digma*) of the quality of the produce in the route between Portus and Rome.⁵⁵ It was evidently possible to trace who had sent the single parts of the grain certified by the sample. They were transported in the ships in sacks previously marked or in bulk and separated by partitions or movable walls, as detailed in the *Digest*.⁵⁶ To avoid adulteration or substitution in transport (or to identify the exact moment in which it was done), the *deigmata* sealed a single part of the product, which was then entrusted most often to military custody, and accompanied its movement as far as the delivery and the conclusion of the operation of verification (*probatio*).⁵⁷ In this way the quality of grain was checked and granted.

Guide to Further Reading

The main studies that deal specifically with the grain supply of Rome are those of Rickman (1971, 1980a) and for the state free distributions (*frumentationes*), Virlouvet (1995, 2009). A short but good survey in English is Aldrete and Mattingly (1999). Also very useful are Tengström (1974), Herz (1988), Garnsey (1988), Sirks (1991), Höbenreich (1997), Curtis (2001), Geraci (2003; 2008; 2012), Erdkamp (2005), and Thurmond (2006).

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ENDNOTES

1. For general discussions on wine and oil, see Tchernia 1986; Amouretti and Brun 1993; Höbenreich 1997, 48–52, 324–5; Tchernia and Brun 1999; Aldrete and Mattingly 1999, 194–8; Tchernia 2000, 757–8; Virlouvét 2000a, 106–7; Thurmond 2006, 73–110 (oil), 111–64 (wine). For further reading, see Mattingly 2007, 219–27; Curtis 2008, 379–84; on oil, Christol 2008, 271–298. For grain see, for example, Tengström 1974; Pavis d’Hescurac 1976; Rickman 1980a; Virlouvét 1985; Garnsey 1988; Herz 1988; Sirks 1991; Höbenreich 1997; Aldrete and Mattingly 1999, 171–204; Virlouvét 2000a, 103–135; 2003, 61–82.
2. Cf. Rickman 1980a, 28–36; Virlouvét 1985; Garnsey 1988, 167–81; Herz 1988, 38–46; Sirks 1991, 11–12; Höbenreich 1997, 24–32; Erdkamp 2000, 53–70; Virlouvét 2000a, 109–10. See also Nuti 2009, 145–78.
3. For a text and translation, see Garnsey, Gallant and Rathbone 1984, 30–44; cf. Virlouvét 1985, 14, 86–7, 91–96, 106. The date which is accepted is that of Garnsey and Rathbone 1985, 20–25; Garnsey 1988, 187–8, 195–6. Canali De Rossi 2002, 41–7, n. 146, proposes instead 57 BCE.
4. Contrary to the opinion expressed by some of the authors in the preceding note.

5. See Geraci and Marin [2003](#), 577–87; Geraci [2003](#), 625–90 (with bibliography); [2004](#), 155–81. See also Vitruvius *De Arch.* 2. Pref.1–4.
6. See above all Garnsey [1988](#); Morley [1996](#); Erdkamp [1998](#); Nicolet [2000a](#), 732–50; Erdkamp [2001](#), 332–56; Edwards and Woolfs [2003](#); Erdkamp [2005](#); Mattingly [2007](#), 219–27.
7. See above all Pleket [1993](#), 14–35; Lo Cascio [2000a](#), 17–69; Nicolet [2000a](#), 739–41; Lo Cascio [2000b](#), 628–59; and [Chapter 6](#) in this volume.
8. See, for example, Nicolet [1994](#), 215–29 (now also Nicolet [2000c](#), 277–93, 437–40); [1999](#), 191–215.
9. Contrast later with Aristid. *Or.* 12; see also Tchernia and Viviers [2000](#), 782–3.
10. Meiggs [1973](#), 50–54, 278–280; Tchernia and Viviers [2000](#), 768–71, 779–81; Tchernia [2003a](#), 45–60.
11. Veg. *Mil.* 4.39 gives 27 May to 14 September as the sailing season, with outside limits of 10 March to 10 November. See also Arnaud [2005](#), 14–28; Marasco [1988](#), 32–3.
12. The *modius* was a dry measure, equivalent to 1.98 US dry gallons, 1.92 imperial gallons.
13. See Aldrete and Mattingly [1999](#), 172–173, 192–193; Tchernia [2000](#), 751–760; Virioust [2000a](#), 105–107; Geraci [2003](#), 633–635. For further discussion see also Geraci [1994](#), 283 and note 38–42 (with bibliography); Erdkamp [2005](#), 226–230; De Romanis [2007](#), 196–9.
14. On the estimation of eight months related to the grain coming from Africa (Joseph. *BJ* 2. 383) see De Romanis [2003](#), 691–738, partic. 696–703. See also Christol [1996](#), 27–37, partic. 30–34 on the title *curator frumenti comparandi in annona Urbis facto a divo Nerva Traiano Augusto*.
15. Usually sold off in various ways after the arrival of the new provisions. See the examples collected in Gast and Sigaut ([1979](#), I; 1981, II; 1985, III, 1 e 2.) Cf. Corbier [1987](#), 411–43, partic. 417–19; see also Halstead and O'Shea 1989.
16. See, above all, Luraschi [1937](#), 113–51; [1946](#), 58–79; Marimpietri and Tirelli [1947](#), 341–64, 367–78. On the problems and methods of conserving and storing cereal, see Sigaut [1978](#); Beutler [1981](#), 19–43; De Luca [1981](#), 147–50; Sigaut [1981](#), 156–80; De Lucia and Assennato [1992](#).
17. See White [1970](#), 187–9, 196–7, 427–8; Rickman [1971](#); [1980a](#), 134–43; Hermansen [1981](#), 227–37; White [1984](#), 62–3; Marasco [1988](#), 41–2; Dupré [1991](#), 205–17; Virioust [1995](#), 88–90; Aldrete and Mattingly [1999](#), 179–

- 80; Curtis 2001, 325–35; Thurmond 2006, 23–32.
18. See Rickman 1971, 85–86; 1980a, 138; Marasco 1988, 41; Virlouvét 2000b, 138–9; Curtis 2001, 332–5; Thurmond 2006, 26–32.
19. Cf. Galsterer 1990, 31–2; 1993, 102–3; Rickman 1991, 111; Garnsey 1991, 78; Tchernia 2000, 756; Geraci 2003, 636–7. See also White 1970, 189, 427–8; Tengström 1974, 15; Halstead 1989, 71; Forbes 1989, 94–5; Horden and Purcell 2000, 204–5, 580–81. Analogous rates of loss (33 % and beyond) are found in De Lucia and Assennato 1992; Gast and Sigaut 1985, 1.
20. See Dal Monte 1956, 148–52; also Pagano 1994, partic. 142; Marasco 2001, 30–31. For a similar analysis of British grain, see Osborne 1971, 156–65, partic. 162–4.
21. See above all Husselman 1952, 56–73; 1953, 81–91; 1979, 56–62. Cf. Tassinari 2007, 27–44; 2009.
22. Cf. The plan, the section, and the captions in Husselman 1952, 60–61, fig. 2–3; Husselman 1979, above all Plates 97, 98b; Plans 18–22. Cf. Procop. *Aed.* 5. 1. 14.
23. See, for example, Suet. *Aug.* 42; Cass. Dio 55. 26. 1–3: in a time of shortage, Augustus banished from Rome slaves for sale, gladiators, and all the foreigners, except doctors and teachers.
24. See Casson 1980, 23 (now also Casson 1984, 100) Cf. Plut. *Otho.* 4. 10; *Pomp.* 5. 1; Plin. *Pan.* 29. 1.
25. Cf. Rickman 1971, 309 and note 3; 1980a, 53, 105, 143; Herz 1988, 46–47; Ruffing 1993, 75–93; Höbenreich 1997, 168 and notes 59, 169, 290–91.
26. Cf. Rickman 1980a, 56–7, 126 and note 25; Virlouvét 1985, 47, 101–2; Herz 1988, 51.
27. Suet. *Aug.* 42. In Plut. *Otho.* 4. 10, is the place in which was sold the grain destined for retail operated by private traders or used to carry out the transfers of the surplus of the *annona*?
28. Cf. Herz 1988, 87–90; Garnsey and Van Nijf 1988, 304–5; Erdkamp 2005, 249–51.
29. Cf. Garnsey 1988, 32, 76–77, 258; Strubbe 1989, 106–7; Höbenreich 1997, 275–6. See however Raeymaekers 2000, 275–86. On the control and the census of the grain in private hands, see the edict of Lucius Antistius Rusticus, governor of Cappadocia under Domitian (*AE* 1925, 126 b), and *P. Oxy.* 42. 3048: cf. Herz 1988, 108–9, 187–9; Garnsey 1988, 19–20, 32,

- 77, 258–9; Höbenreich 1997, 303–4; Virlouvvet 2000b, 145–6.
30. *Dig.* 48. 12. 2. Cf. Herz 1988, 81–85; Pollera 1991, 405–31; Höbenreich 1997, 159–65, 206–33.
31. Cf. Herz 1988, 90–102; Sirks 1991, 40–42, 61–7; Höbenreich 1997, 31–2 and note 29, 75–81, 294. See also Lo Cascio 1999, 163–82; Erdkamp 2005, 244–9; Sirks 2007, 173–8.
32. Note also the phrase that precedes it: “the fiscus buys everything that it seems suitable to buy.”
33. The provisions are counted daily also in Tac. *Hist.* 4.52; *Ann.* 12.43 (Claudius); Sen. *De brev. vitae*, 18.5 (Caligula); cf. Virlouvvet 2000b, 145 and note 58; De Romanis 2002, 279–298.
34. Cf. The two dossiers of Gaius Novius Eunus and Lucius Marius Iucundus are represented principally by *TPSulp.* (Camodeca 1999), 51, 52, 45 and *TPSulp.* 53, 46, 79 respectively. See above all Casson 1980, 26–33 (now also Casson 1984, 104–10); Camodeca 1994, 103–28; Camodeca 1999, 140–41, 182–83; Camodeca 2000, esp. 181; Virlouvvet 2000b, 131–49.
35. This identification is made on the basis of *IvE* 2.274 (129 CE), in which Hadrian is honored by the boule and demos of Ephesus because, among other things, “he has consented to send grain from Egypt and has rendered the ports rich.”
36. Cf. Wörrle 1971, 325–40; De Romanis 2002, 287–98; Geraci 2003, 642–3; De Romanis 2007, 193–4.
37. For example, I. Tralleis und Nysa, 80 (Tralles: 127 CE) Cf. Strubbe 1989, 112, 116.
38. For example, *IvE* 7.3016; I. Tralleis and Nysa, 77 (Tralles: second century CE); I. Tralleis und Nysa, 145; *SEG* 11.491 (Sparta: c. 115–150 CE). Cf. Strubbe 1987, 57–9; Strubbe 1989, 107–8.
39. It is less probable to suppose the same for the initiative of Helena, queen of Adiabene, in the time of Claudius (see Joseph. *AJ* 20. 51–52; cf. 101; Oros. 7.6.12): the passage does not exclude the possibility that her acquisition of grain had been effectively on the private market.
40. Cf. Rougé 1966, 57, 199, 266; Rickman 1980a, 71, 130; Frederiksen 1980–1981, 5–6; Lo Cascio 1993, 51–2; Geraci 2003, 643–5; Tchernia 2003b, 617–19. The meaning of *tabellariae* is not entirely clear; these may be “mail boats,” bringing news of the fleet in advance, as well as other communications (perhaps implied by Sen. *Ep.* 77.3). Cf. Rougé 1966, 199; Levy 1982–1983, 111, note 62; Salway 2001, 22–66, esp. 48–66; De

Romanis 2002, 285–6; Geraci 2003, 643–4 and 668, note 94.

41. Cf. Griffin 1976, 358–359, 400; Frederiksen 1980–1981, 6; Rickman 1980a, 130; De Romanis 2002, 286.
42. Cf. J. Rougé 1966, 265–268. For the overall problem, see Geraci 1994, 287, with bibliography; 2003, 644–5.
43. An operation not possible for ships of greater tonnage: cf. Strabo 5. 3. 5; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 3. 44. 3; cf. Casson 1965, 32 and note 10; Pomey and Tchernia 1978, 235–43 (Pomey and Tchernia, 1980–1981, 32–45).
44. See Tchernia and Viviers 2000, 779–780. According to Rickman 1971, 10–11; 1980a, 17–20; 1980b, 263; 1991, 111–13, for only the grain from Egypt: at least 800 would arrive in the port and probably many more; and more than 4500 smaller boats would transport the grain up the Tiber; for Lo Cascio 1990, 244: around 800 vessels; in Lo Cascio 1993, 53: for only Egyptian grain 560 ships of 250 gross tonnage arrive; Aldrete and Mattingly 1999, 193 and note 61: a minimum of 948 arrivals to transport 237,000 tons, but certainly many more. See also Frederiksen 1980–1981, 24; Camodeca 1994, 109–110; Galsterer 1990, 26–28; 1993, 99–100. For the transport going up to the Tiber, see Casson 1965, 31–39; Pomey and Tchernia 1978, 240–241; 1980–1981, 39–41.
45. See, for example, Sacco 1984, n.2, 3, 20; *IGUR* II, 1, 393; *IGRR* I, 1062. Discussed by Sirks 1991, 103–5.
46. See already Rickman 1980a, 130–131; Haas 1988, 44; 1997, 42; Aldrete and Mattingly 1999, 196; for grain, oil, and wine, 1702 shipments as a minimum number, with an average of arrivals of 17 ships a day for a period of 100 days.
47. *P. Turner*. 45; cf. Haas 1988, 58, note 127; 1997, 374, note 72.
48. April: Casson 1971, 297. Middle of May: Haas 1988, 58, note 127; 1997, 374, note 72. In general, see Casson 1971, 297–8.
49. On checking through measures of capacity and weight see Geraci 2004, 155–181; 2012. Cf. also Höbenreich 1997, 66–68, 116; De Romanis 2003, 696 and note 17–20, 721.
50. According to Philostratus, *V. A.* (7. 16), to go up from the mouth of the Tiber to Rome needed three days: “Having set out from Dicearchia (Puteoli), on the third day one arrives at the mouth of the Tiber, from where it takes as much time to go up the river until Rome.” The interpretation of the text is that of Le Gall 1953, 257 and note 10; Rickman 1980a, 19; 1991, 112; Sirks 1991, 43; Höbenreich 1997, 91; Tchernia 2003a, 49 and notes 25 and 56. On the *dimissoria*, see Purpura 2002, 131–

51. See Guéraud 1933, 62–64 and the photographic figures; Guéraud 1950, 107–115 and Plate I; Gofas 1970; Rickman 1971, 189–90; Marichal 1975, 524–7; Pavis D’Escrac 1976, 231–3; Liou and Morel 1977, 189–97; Rickman 1980a, 122; 1980b, 265; Vélissaropoulos 1980, 73, 284–5; Frösén 1980–1981, 173; Gofas 1982, 121–9; Daris 1988, 736–7; Gofas 1989, 425–44; De Salvo 1992, 117–18; Höbenreich 1997, 109–11; Rickman 1998, 319–20; Geraci 2003, 646–55; 2004, 155–81, partic. 159; Bresson 2008, 101–5; Geraci 2012.
52. The exact reading of the remaining part of the inscription is the object of discussion: cf. *Not. Scavi*, 1946, 110–11; *CIL* 6.9591; Marichal 1975, 524–7 (a 524 *bis*, Pl. II, photographic reproduction of the piece. See also Gofas 1970, 66.
53. *Not. Scav.* 1946, 110; *CIL* 6.5894, with Add., p. 725; Marichal 1975, 524.
54. Liou and Morel 1977, 189–197 (190–191, photographic reproduction). From this known example one can deduce that many anepigraphic containers of small dimensions (small amphorae or pots) could have been *deigmata*.
55. *Cod. Theod.* 14.4.9. See among others Gofas 1970, 76–7; Rickman 1971, 188–90; Tengström 1974, 54, 74–5; Rickman 1980a, 122; Sirks 1991, 256, 264, 283, 377, 414; De Salvo 1992, 179–80, 519, 559; Höbenreich 1997, 112 and note 239; Rickman 1998, 319–20.
56. *Dig.* 19.2.31: the partitions and the walls were also useful to avoid the heeling of the cargo, which could easily happen if the grain was loaded not in sacks, but was heaped, and had not been stowed completely full. Cf. Rougé 1966, 78, 387–8; Gofas 1970, 67–68; Casson 1971, 200; Rickman 1980a, 132–4; Hermansen 1981, 228–229; Höbenreich 1997, 1079; Tchernia 2003b, 617.
57. Geraci 2003, 652–655; 2004, 170–177; 2012.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Water Supply and Sewers

Harry B. Evans

Although Romans tapped natural springs and rivers, dug wells, and collected water in cisterns for drinking and industrial needs, their aqueduct systems are justly considered among the most impressive monuments of their civilization, and those in ancient Rome itself especially so: Pliny the Elder declares that there was “nothing more marvelous in the world” (*HN* 36.123), and Sextus Julius Frontinus, the *curator aquarum* (water commissioner) appointed by the emperor Nerva, in *De aquaeductu urbis Romae* (“On Rome’s Water Supply”), his treatise on the water system published at the end of the first century CE, compares Rome’s aqueducts to the “useless pyramids or pointless but famous monuments of the Greeks” (*De aquaeductu* 16, hereafter cited without title).

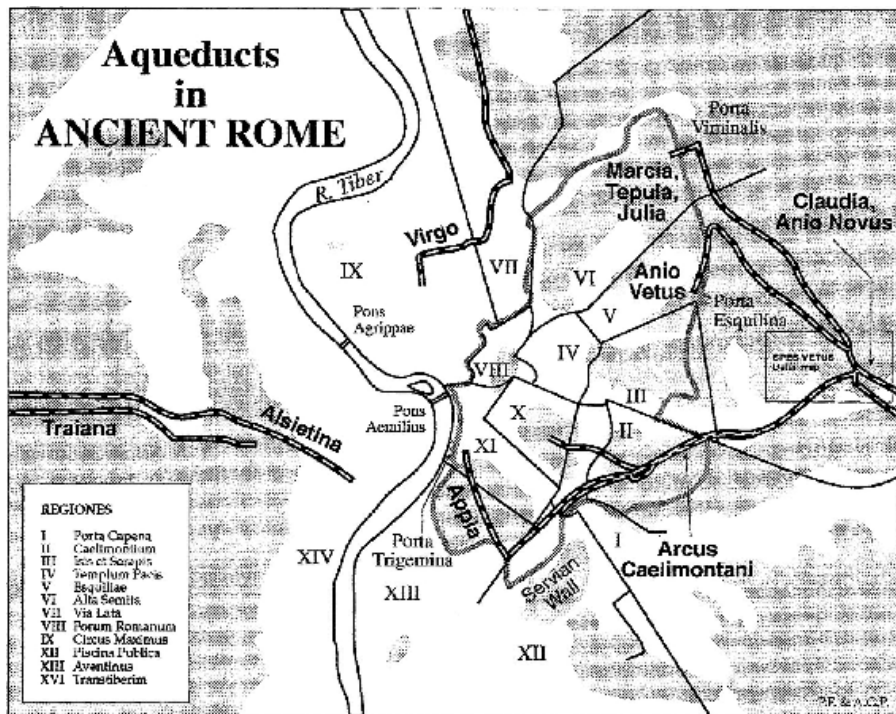
How Aqueducts Worked

To make sense of Rome’s water system, some preliminary observations on Roman hydraulic engineering and water distribution are in order. Aqueducts in the Roman world functioned basically on the principle of constant gravity flow, quite different from modern closed pipe systems. Water was carried from a source – a spring, a lake, or a river – through a *specus* (closed conduit) which usually ran underground to a terminus or *castellum* (distribution tank). Along the line could be incorporated any number of *piscinae* (settling tanks) to remove foreign matter or sediment between its source and *castellum*. At points along the course, a *ramus* (subsidiary line) could be introduced to supply additional water, augmenting the capacity of the line. In addition, a subsidiary or branch line could begin from a main conduit before it reached its *castellum*. Roman aqueduct conduits generally followed the lie of the land, crossing low ground on bridges or substructures only when necessary to maintain an even flow of water; this often resulted in rather meandering courses.

At its distribution point, the water was divided for delivery through *fistulae* (pipes), either tile or lead, which were attached to the *castellum* by a delivery spigot or nozzle, then laid, usually below ground level, along major streets. For our understanding of how an aqueduct *castellum* worked, we are largely indebted to a chapter of Vitruvius’s treatise on architecture (*De Arch.* 8.6.1–2) that describes division of the water into three parts, for supply of *lacus et*

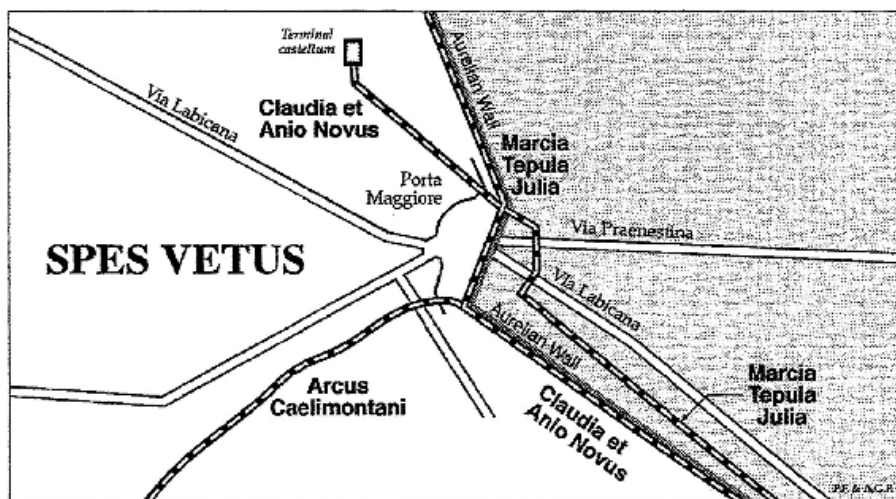
salientes (public basins and fountains), *balneae* (baths), and *privatae domus* (private houses). Vitruvius's tripartite division is generally repeated in standard works on Roman hydraulics and is indeed even accepted by many scholars as a canonical arrangement. It does not, however, agree with the analysis of water distribution given by Frontinus. Such a discrepancy is not an insurmountable problem, since Frontinus wrote a good 100 years later, and distribution plans within Rome may have been modified during the first century CE. Moreover, Vitruvius's book on architecture, highly theoretical in nature, is frequently in conflict with what we know of actual practice in the Roman world (Hodge 1992, 280–82).

Archaeological evidence available to us further complicates the problem; remains of aqueduct *castella* which survive at Pompeii and Nîmes indicate that these tanks distributed their water, not strictly according to function or subsequent use, but rather according to the geography of the areas served: pipes from the *castellum* carried water along main streets to designated neighborhoods, and the same branch lines supplied both public basins and private homes (Richardson 1988, 54–60; Hodge 1992, 282–91). From main reservoirs a number of branch lines were laid, which themselves terminated in their own *castella*, from where the water was distributed further, sometimes to different quarters at different times. Frontinus himself describes such staggered distribution in the case of the Aqua Crabra near Tusculum outside Rome (9.5). We cannot assume that the relatively simple distribution net in Pompeii paralleled arrangements in Rome itself, but the large number of *castella* which Frontinus records in the city at his time, 247 in all (78.3), suggests that geographical distribution in individual regions or neighborhoods was a standard arrangement followed there (Evans 1994, 6–8). Although Rome's aqueducts, particularly those entering the city from the east in the vicinity of Spes Vetus, can be traced to their main terminal *castella* (Maps 9 and 10), there is scanty archaeological evidence for what happened to their water after that point. This makes Frontinus an invaluable source for understanding the system.



Map 9 Termini of the major aqueducts in Rome.

(Reproduced from Harry B. Evans, *Water Distribution in Ancient Rome: the Evidence of Frontinus* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1994), fig. 1).



Map 10 The area of Spes Vetus and the courses of the main aqueducts entering the city above ground.

(Reproduced from Harry B. Evans, *Water Distribution in Ancient Rome: the Evidence of Frontinus* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1994), fig. 2).

Frontinus on Rome's Water System

Frontinus begins his treatise with a thumbnail history of nine of Rome's aqueducts, from the city's first line, the Aqua Appia of 312 BCE, through the Aqua Claudia and Aqua Anio Novus, both completed by the emperor Claudius in 52 CE (4–16). He goes on to discuss the different elevations of the city's aqueducts (17–22); pipe dimensions (23–63); the delivery volumes of individual aqueducts (64–76); distribution statistics for the lines (77–86); recent improvements under Nerva (87–93); and administration and maintenance of the system (94–130).

Throughout his treatise Frontinus reports water volumes in *quinariae*, a measurement based on the capacity of the *fistula quinaria*, a pipe one and a quarter Roman digits in diameter (25.1–2). Conversion of *quinariae* into modern volumes is problematic: modern estimates of total water delivery within ancient Rome vary greatly, from about 132 to 290 million gallons a day (0.5 to 1.1 million cubic meters). Such estimates are also of limited value, since there is no sure way to determine the population of the ancient city at any given time and therefore no way to establish an average daily volume per inhabitant (Bruun 1991, 385–86; Taylor 2000, 33–39).

Despite these difficulties, Frontinus's statistics are still valuable: because he appears to have regarded the *quinaria* as a unit internally consistent and applicable to the volumes he reports, his data can be used to determine the relative capacities and delivery of individual aqueducts within Rome's water system as a whole. Moreover, given the inconsistencies in the figures reported in the text, even if exact deliveries cannot be determined for individual aqueducts, Frontinus's statistics do reflect *commentarii* (official records) and administrative practices in effect when he assumed office. His data are, therefore, not only furnished by a knowledgeable source, albeit in a somewhat faulty text, but are also the primary statistics available.

Frontinus reports a division of volumes in *quinariae* for the nine aqueducts operating in the late first century CE according to function: water was furnished *in nomine Caesaris* (in Caesar's name) to supply buildings directly under the emperor's control; to *privati* (private consumers); and for *usus publici* (public needs). He also divides this last category into four areas: *castra* (military installations); *opera publica* (public works); *munera* (ornamental fountains); and *lacus* (public basins).

While indispensable for reconstructing water distribution in Rome, Frontinus's data do not solve all the problems: aqueducts could be introduced for a number of reasons, not all of them directly related to population density and individual consumption. Moreover, Frontinus's statistics on water delivery are at best partial, dealing only with the distribution network when he

assumed office (64.1, 87.1), and his figures, as transmitted in the text, are at times inconsistent. Our evidence is therefore limited, and the conclusions to be drawn from it far less complete than we would like.

In addition, the city was never entirely dependent on aqueducts for its water; the site of Rome is well watered naturally, with abundant springs, several of which are cited by Frontinus himself as having curative powers (4.2). Such natural sources furnished a good deal of the city's water; even after aqueducts were introduced, they never went out of use. Because of Rome's high water table, water could also be drawn with relative ease from wells (4.1) and collected for use in household cisterns (Hodge 1992, 48–66), and that of the Tiber was also available. But when such resources proved insufficient, water had to be brought in from outside.

Aqueduct construction throughout the city's history was generally not indicative of orderly planning. The opposite in fact was rather true, especially in Republican Rome: the city fathers tended to allow needs to become critical before introducing aqueducts, and funds had to be available to pay for their construction, as was the case with the Anio Vetus and Aqua Marcia (6.1, 7.4).

For several centuries, Rome's natural supplies appear to have been adequate for its needs; not until the late fourth century did the city receive its first aqueduct, the Appia of 312 BCE. Drawn from springs east of the city, the Appia approached Rome from the high ground of the Esquiline and traversed the Caelian and Aventine underground, emerging on an arcade only for a short distance in the immediate vicinity of the Porta Capena of the “Servian” Wall, to terminate near the river. Because of its low level, it bypassed most of the city under which it ran, but it served the area for which it had been originally introduced – the commercial district of the Forum Boarium and the Republican port of Rome. Its introduction therefore complements the other major construction of Appius Claudius's censorship, the Via Appia which served commercial as well as military needs of the growing city. Later extensions of the Appia brought limited deliveries to adjacent districts, including the Transtiberim (Evans 1994, 65–74).

Rome's second aqueduct, the Anio Vetus, introduced in 272 BCE, was a much more ambitious project. It drew its water from much farther away, in the upper Anio Valley, and had a capacity much greater than that of the Appia but, like the first aqueduct, began its distribution just inside a gate of the “Servian” Wall, the Porta Esquilina. This terminus, considerably higher than that of the Appia at the Porta Trigemina, along with its greater capacity, made possible its distribution throughout large areas, particularly eastern regions that the Appia could not reach. Its introduction therefore points to the city's expansion eastward to districts within the “Servian” Wall, particularly the growth of the Esquiline, most of which was inside the circuit of the wall and which, alone of the city's hills, did not have a major spring associated with it. While from a technical standpoint the Anio Vetus marked an important step

forward from the first aqueduct, Frontinus's data indicate that it was planned and introduced to complement the Appia, serving areas too high for it to reach or too distant from the Porta Trigemina (Evans 1994, 75–82).

Rome's third aqueduct, the Marcia, was not introduced until 144 BCE. The city's need for water had increased dramatically in the intervening century, particularly after the Second Punic War. The Marcia was therefore a line of much greater capacity than the first two aqueducts, a factor which, together with its height, made possible its widespread distribution. Its water was also of exceptional quality, and the Marcia became the most famous of all the Republican lines. Because it entered the city inside the Porta Viminalis, at the highest point within the circuit of the "Servian" Wall, it could distribute its water all over. Branches ran to the Caelian and Aventine, as well as to the Capitoline and Palatine, the first time these two hills were supplied by an aqueduct. The Marcia therefore distributed drinking water of good quality at a high level throughout the city. Its introduction in the mid-second century BCE points to extremely rapid growth of the city, indeed a population explosion within Rome (Evans 1994, 83–93). Only one more aqueduct was added during the Republic, the Aqua Tepula built 19 years later as a line of limited capacity originally intended to supplement the delivery of the Marcia; its introduction so soon after the Marcia's completion is further evidence of the city's rapid growth during this period (Evans 1994, 95–98).

After the Marcia and Tepula, no new aqueducts were constructed for almost a century, when Marcus Agrippa during his aedileship assumed responsibility for a water system that needed urgent overhaul after long neglect. Agrippa's remedies were sweeping, designed to meet the needs of a growing population and the ambitious Augustan building program then under way, and his implementation of them revolutionized the city's water system. Agrippa repaired the Appia, Anio Vetus, and Marcia, extensively reworked the Tepula to increase its capacity, and added two new lines of his own, the Aqua Julia, which distributed from inside the Porta Viminalis to eastern districts and the city center, and the Aqua Virgo, which was brought into Rome from the north to serve the Campus Martius and Transtiber. These new aqueducts complemented each other not only in the districts they reached but also in the functions served. Frontinus's statistics indicate that the Julia and Virgo were specialized lines, furnishing large quantities of water to a limited number of areas or complexes; both were therefore constructed to meet needs of the Augustan building program.

Agrippa's planning, and his *commentarii* which regularized it, became the basis for Rome's *cura aquarum*, the administration of the water system established after his death in 11 BCE. Agrippa's innovations also indicate a new development: for the first time, the "Servian" Wall was no longer a factor in determining the entry points of aqueducts and their subsequent distribution. The Aqua Virgo supplied districts north and west of it, and the Julia

distributed to Regions V and XII in the southeast, where Augustus's extension of the city had dramatically increased the population. Distribution to the Transtiberim by the Virgo, Appia, and Anio Vetus are a clear indication of the growth on the other side of the Tiber (Evans 1994, 99–109). The aqueducts no doubt crossed the river through pipes installed on the Tiber bridges, as Frontinus himself indicates (11.2), but exact arrangements for individual lines cannot be determined (Taylor 2000, 136–68). No physical evidence for the use of siphons survives in Rome itself, although Roman engineers certainly employed them effectively in other cities (Hodge 1992, 147–60).

Later aqueducts in Rome point to a continuing concern to augment the total supply delivered and to improve the overall operation of the system. A decade after Agrippa, Augustus restored all the lines, doubled the capacity of the Marcia by tapping a second source for it, and introduced the Aqua Alsietina into the Transtiber to supply his *naumachia* there (Taylor 2000, 169–200). None of these projects, however, supplanted Agrippa's organization of the water system; his planning remained in place at least to the time of Frontinus, and perhaps throughout the rest of the city's history, even though later lines were introduced to augment overall delivery.

With the continued growth of the city in the first century CE and higher standards of living, existing water supplies became inadequate. Caligula began construction of two new aqueducts, a project completed by Claudius in 52; the more important of the two lines, the Aqua Claudia and Aqua Anio Novus, bears his name. By far the most sophisticated to date of all Rome's aqueducts, they entered the city at a level higher than that of all earlier lines, which made distribution to every region possible. Their capacity was also huge, effectively doubling the total supply of water delivered within Rome.

Although both Claudian aqueducts appear to have been planned to supplement the existing system, to increase the total delivery for all functions and uses, their height and capacity made them the master part of Rome's water supply. The older aqueducts they had been planned to supplement were themselves relegated to secondary status, as back-up lines for the Claudia and Anio Novus. The Claudia itself, drawn from springs in the upper Anio Valley, also distributed a considerable portion of its water through the high-level branch of the Arcus Caelimontani to heavily populated districts. In addition, Claudius introduced a reorganization of the *cura aquarum*, with the appointment of an imperial procurator and formation of a second team of repairmen for maintenance of the lines (Evans 1994, 115–28).

Frontinus's statistics allow us to assess the approximate range of each aqueduct's distribution within Rome (Table 11.1). Every region of Rome received water, but deliveries varied greatly, from the Circus Maximus (Region XI), served by only two lines, to the Transtiberim (XIV), supplied by seven. Most regions received deliveries from four or five different lines. Regions V and VI (Esquiliae and Alta Semita) were particularly well-

supplied, largely for reasons of topography: the high ground of the Esquiline was the entry point for all of Rome's aqueducts brought from the east. The Campus Martius (Regions VII and IX) also received water from five lines, an arrangement not surprising, given its monumentalization in the late Republic and early empire.

Table 11.1 Regional distribution by aqueduct. By permission, University of Michigan Press.

Region	Appia	AnioVetus	Marcia	Tepula	Julia	Virgo	Alsietina	Claudia	Claudia/ AnioNovus
I Porta Capena		✓	✓						✓
II Caeli-Montana	✓				✓			✓	✓
III Isis et Serapis		✓	✓		✓				✓
IV Templum Pacis		✓	✓	✓					✓
V Esquiliae		✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
VI Alta Semita		✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
VII Via Lata		✓	✓	✓		✓			
VIII Forum Romanum	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓
IX Circus Flaminius	✓	✓	✓			✓			✓
X Palatium			✓		✓			✓	✓
XI Circus Maximus	✓								✓
XII Piscina Publica	✓	✓			✓				✓
XIII Aventinus	✓							✓	✓
XIV	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓

Even more instructive is closer examination of deliveries by individual lines. Frontinus’s statistics allow us to assess the approximate range of each aqueduct's distribution within the city through the number of *castella* assigned to it (Table 11.2).

Table 11.2 The number of *castella* assigned to each aqueduct.

<i>Castella</i>	<i>No. of castella</i>	<i>Volume (in quinariae)</i>		
<i>intraurbem</i>				
Appia	20	(8 %)	699	(6.7 %)
AnioVetus	35	(14.2 %)	1,508	(14.5 %)
Marcia	51	(20.6 %)	1,472	(14.1 %)
Tepula	14	(5.7 %)	331	(3.2 %)
Julia	17	(6.9 %)	597	(5.7 %)
Virgo	18	(7.3 %)	2,304	(22.1 %)
Claudia/ AnioNovus	92	(37.2 %)	3,498	(33.6 %)
TOTAL	247 <i>castella</i>	10,409 <i>quinariae</i>		

The extensive distribution of the combined Claudia/ Anio Novus throughout the city is obvious, as is also the relative importance of earlier lines within the system. The Appia's limited volume and the low level of its entry prevented its widespread distribution. Of the other Republican lines, the Marcia, as drinking water of high quality, was distributed more widely throughout the city than the larger Anio Vetus. The Virgo, a much more specialized line brought to only three regions, delivered enormous volumes through very few *castella*, but the other Agrippan aqueducts, the reworked Tepula and Julia, were more widely distributed; the combined *castella* of these two Agrippan lines, 31 in all, were almost as numerous as those of the Anio Vetus, while the combined volume of the two aqueducts was only slightly more than half that of the earlier Anio Vetus.

Also worth examination are the purposes or functions that aqueduct water served. Frontinus gives a summary for the total delivery *extra urbem* and *intra urbem* (78.2–3) before presenting his detailed analyses for individual lines (79–86) Table 11.3 summarizes total delivery outside and inside the city.

Table 11.3 Total delivery of water outside and inside the city.

Aqueduct distribution <i>extra urbem</i>			
	<i>nomine Caesaris</i>	1,718 q.	(42.3 %)
	<i>privati</i>	2,345 q.	(57.7 %)

Total		4,063 <i>quinariae</i>	
Aqueduct distribution <i>intra urbem</i>			
	<i>nomine Caesaris</i>	1,707 q.	(17.2 %)
	<i>privatis</i>	3,847 q.	(38.6 %)
	<i>usibus publicis</i>	4,401 q.	(44.2 %)
	18 <i>castra</i>	279 q.	(2.8 %)
	95 <i>opera publica</i>	2,301 q.	(23.1 %)
	39 <i>munera</i>	386 q.	(3.9 %)
	591 <i>lacus</i>	1,335 q.	(13.4 %)
Total	9,995 <i>quinariae</i>		

Approximately one-third of all water from Rome's aqueducts was distributed outside the city, and almost 60 % of this distribution *extra urbem* (or 16.7 % of the total volume of 14,018) was supplied to private consumers, presumably for the needs of suburban villas and irrigation of gardens and farms. Imperial properties outside the city received the remainder of this suburban distribution. The privileged position of suburban consumers is therefore clear, and it is not surprising that the largest concentration of suburban villas near Rome is to be found in the southeast sector of the *suburbium*, along the route taken by the Anio Vetus, Marcia, Tepula, and Julia, and the Claudian lines into the city.

Distribution *intra urbem*, as presented by Frontinus, is not inconsistent with the arrangements favoring supplies to *privati* outside it. Approximately 20 % of the total delivery inside Rome was furnished *nomine Caesaris*; almost 40 % to private consumers, the result of dramatically increased supplies after the introduction of the Claudian aqueducts; and almost half (44 %) to public needs. Within this last category more than half the volume delivered (and almost a quarter of the total delivery to the city) went for public monuments, and relatively little for *castra* and *munera*. Only slightly more than one-tenth of the total delivery went to public basins, approximately one-third of the volume delivered to private consumers.

Rome's aqueducts in Frontinus's time certainly met public needs, but in terms of actual volume delivered, almost 40 % of the water they supplied went to consumers who were willing to pay for it or had been granted water rights by the emperor. Frontinus himself cites both public needs and private pleasures (*publicis usibus et privatis voluptatibus*) as the reasons for the introduction of the Claudian lines (13.1); aqueducts in his time were certainly a key element in making higher standards of living possible for the privileged few. Their extensive distribution to *privati* (both outside and inside the city) and the fraud which it encouraged is certainly one of the reasons for Frontinus's comments on the many abuses in private deliveries he was determined to correct (94–96). Also worth noting is the total volume of approximately 20 %

delivered *nomine Caesaris* and to *munera*; about one-fifth of all the water distributed in the city was furnished not for direct consumption, but for other purposes, architectural and official, a confirmation that the Claudian aqueducts were supplying water in abundance.

The importance of the two Claudian lines within the overall system becomes even more dramatic when we examine the delivery of individual aqueducts to public basins (Table 11.4).

Table 11.4 The delivery of individual aqueducts to public basins.

<i>Distribution to 591 lacus</i>		
Appia (92)	226 q.	(16.9 %)
AnioVetus (94)	218 q.	(16.3 %)
Marcia (113)	256 q.	(19.2 %)
Tepula (13)	32 q.	(2.4 %)
Julia (28)	65 q.	(4.9 %)
Virgo (25)	51 q.	(3.8 %)
Claudia/AnioNovus (226)	585 q.	(36.0 %)
TOTAL	1,333 <i>quinariae</i>	

The two Claudian lines delivered more than one-third of the total volume supplied to *lacus* within the city, and the 226 basins they supplied were 44 % of the total number in Rome. But it is also worth noting the large volume delivered to *lacus* by the three Republican aqueducts, to 299 in all, more than half of the total volume supplied to basins within the entire water system. The Appia, Anio Vetus, and Marcia were dwarfed by the later imperial aqueducts in size and overall capacity but, in Frontinus’s time, these Republican lines continued to play a key role in the water system through their deliveries to public basins. The Appia and Marcia in particular supplied one-third of the total volume delivered in the city for this purpose. The Marcia’s role here is not surprising, given its high quality and its height of entry into the city. The Appia, too, was of good quality: because its low level precluded its delivery to the eastern hills and higher ground, the 92 *lacus* it supplied must have been concentrated in the regions it served. Frontinus’s statistics also give no indication of a double or backup supply for individual *lacus* within the city; adding up the number of basins he lists in chapters 79–86, we have a total of exactly 591, corresponding to the figure given in 78.3. Each basin seems to have been supplied by one aqueduct, and only one, when Frontinus assumed office. This explains his pride at innovations making possible new back-up supplies throughout the city (87.5).

This is a water system that worked, and Frontinus’s pride in it was not unjustified. But it was also not without its problems, a subject to which he returns frequently in his treatise. Not only was the network vulnerable to fraud and illegal taps, but a considerable amount of water may well have been wasted within it. Some waste, of course, was necessary for flushing the streets

and sewers, but in a “zero-sum” system, where illegal diversions or waste would result in a loss for others of a vital commodity, strict regulation and monitoring were essential. Frontinus’s concern about accurate measurements is therefore understandable. The system was not perfect, nor should we expect it to have been. It was also a system in constant use, requiring extensive maintenance and reconstruction.

Like Rome itself, the city's aqueducts, as Frontinus presents them in their chronology and development, do not reflect a systematic master plan, but rather the growth of a distribution system which had evolved over four centuries, with supplies being substantially augmented and the means of delivery improved when urban needs became critical. Also quite obvious from our review of its development are the economies achieved by Rome's water commissioners, who used earlier aqueducts and the infrastructure of the distribution system already in place to complement the more recent and larger lines. Frontinus himself stresses the importance of economy, to avoid unnecessary construction or extension of aqueduct lines and to make repairs in a manner as cost effective as possible, either through his own staff or outside contractors (119.2–3). The Claudian aqueducts were certainly the keystone of the system when Frontinus became curator, but the earlier Republican aqueducts, continued to play a critical role. Indeed, their operation allowed Frontinus and his successors the luxury of providing back-up supplies throughout the city (87.3–5), an important part of the Trajanic improvements that he declares are under way (88).

Roman hydraulic technology did not reach its high point with the Claudian aqueducts in Rome itself; remains of water systems in other areas of the Roman world, particularly southern France, Asia Minor, and North Africa, demonstrate increased sophistication in their techniques of water delivery. However, such elaborate systems do not seem to have been built in the capital, even though Trajan brought the impressive Aqua Traiana to the Transtiberim some 60 years after the Claudian lines. Because the Traiana postdates Frontinus’s treatise, we know relatively little about its distribution and capacity. Epigraphical evidence indicates that its water was delivered throughout the entire city, but its introduction into the Transtiberim also points to special needs and industrial uses within that area (Taylor 2000, 207–48). In addition, its intake near Lake Bracciano has recently been explored and documented (Taylor, Rinne, O’Neill and O’Neill 2010, 358–75). Alexander Severus is attested to have added one more aqueduct in the early third century, the Aqua Alexandrina, to supply his baths in the Campus Martius (*SHA Alex. Sev.* 25), but all other emperors after Trajan limited themselves to repairs and improvements to the existing system.

There were therefore no additional lines on the scale of the Claudian aqueducts and the Aqua Traiana after the first century. The existing network appears to have been generally adequate for the city's needs throughout the

rest of its history, since Rome seems to have reached her greatest size by the mid-second century. Significant additions were made to the Aqua Marcia by Caracalla and Diocletian: Caracalla tapped a new source to augment the line for delivery to his bath complex, and Diocletian also constructed a new channel for his baths on the Quirinal. The Severan emperors also reworked the Caelian branch of the Claudia to augment supplies to the Palatine, but water distribution throughout the empire remained essentially that which it had become in the early second century.

The fourth-century Regionary Catalogues indicate that the system was still in full operation at the time of Constantine; the *Curiosum* and *Notitia Urbis Romae* list 19 aqueducts within the city, along with a huge number of *lacus*, twice that given by Frontinus. Rome's aqueducts also continued to function well into late antiquity, until the sixth century when, during the Gothic siege, Vitigis cut their channels outside Rome and Belisarius blocked the conduits to prevent use of them as a means of infiltration (Procop. *Goth.* 5.19.8). This forced the remaining population into low-lying areas closer to the river and prompted the development of medieval Rome in the Campus Martius.

A history of the city's growth can therefore be reconstructed in part from the evidence of the system built to serve its water needs, as Frontinus's evidence permits us to understand it. Though Rome's aqueduct system grew by fits and starts, the entire network, after it was reorganized by Agrippa, functioned to provide sufficient water for urban requirements consistent with economies of maintenance and construction. We do not have Agrippa's *commentarii* on the system, but Frontinus's treatise is a valuable source of information on it. Detailed examination of Frontinus's statistics does not permit a comprehensive overview, much less a complete understanding, of Rome's water system in his time, but it does demonstrate how water was delivered for particular purposes in particular districts, giving us a snapshot view, however partial, of aqueduct distribution in the city at the end of the first century CE.

Water disposal: Sewers in Ancient Rome

Because no comprehensive source like Frontinus survives on the sewer system of the ancient city, our knowledge of it is much sketchier. Like the aqueducts, however, in antiquity, Roman sewers were considered marvels of hydraulic engineering, earning the praise of both Strabo (*Geog.* 5.3.8) and Pliny (*HN* 36.108).

Like the sewers of Pompeii, which have been studied and documented (Poehler 2012, 95–120), those of Rome were tied to the aqueduct system, from which the overflow water served to flush the city's waste. The sewers also served the vital function of keeping low-lying areas drained within the

city: construction of the famous Cloaca Maxima, traditionally associated with Tarquinius Priscus in the early sixth century BCE, appears to have originally been a drainage project to reclaim the marshy ground between the Capitoline, Palatine, and eastern hills to make possible its exploitation and urbanization as a city center (Hopkins 2007, 1–15). Originally an open drainage canal running from the Argiletum through the Forum and Velabrum, it later became an underground vaulted sewer that terminated at the Tiber; its emissary can be seen today in the modern river embankment near the remaining span of the Pons Aemilius and the Tiber Island (Bauer 1993, 288–89). Agrippa, who reorganized the aqueduct system during his aedileship, is also credited with reworking the sewers, and is even reported to have sailed through them in a boat to demonstrate his improvements (Plin. *HN* 36.104).

Other principal sewers within ancient Rome were not systematically documented until the end of the nineteenth century when construction of a modern sanitation system for the city was undertaken (Narducci 1889; Mochecciano Carpano 1984, 168–76). They include a line along the modern Via della Croce in the northern Campus Martius, the Giuditto sewer which drained the low ground near the Pantheon, a line in the valley of the Circus Maximus, and another south of the Aventine along the Via Marmorata, all with extensive feeder systems. Despite this network, waste disposal in Roman cities was no doubt primitive by modern standards, with open sewers and gutters along the streets and widespread use of chamber pots, and Rome itself was no exception. There is also no evidence of any sort of sewage treatment in the ancient city; this made the steady flow of Rome's aqueduct system all the more important.

Guide to Further Reading

Aicher 1995 is the best overall introduction for aqueduct hunters interested in visiting remains of the lines in and near the city, while Bruun 1991 is the most complete treatment of Rome's *cura aquarum*. Frontinus, *De aquaeductu urbis Romae*, edited by R. H. Rodgers (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) provides an authoritative Latin text of our most important source, with a comprehensive introduction and commentary. An English translation of this text has been published by Rodgers 2005, which is also available on line at <http://www.uvm.edu/~rrogers/Frontinus.html> (accessed January 3, 2018). Evans 1994 also includes a translation of the treatise. Hodge 1992 is a comprehensive treatment of water systems and hydraulic engineering throughout the Roman world, with a chapter on sewers, a full bibliography, and extensive notes. Taylor 2000 focuses on those aqueducts known to have crossed the Tiber, particularly the Aqua Traiana.

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CHAPTER TWELVE

Streets and Street Life

J. Bert Lott

Different Streets

Streets brought the city and its constituent communities together in ways that buildings, public or private, could not. They were active places used daily by almost all of the city's residents, regardless of status. They were not simply negative spaces between buildings, though they may appear as such both on representations of the city such as the Severan marble plan and in geographic lists such as the Regionary Catalogues. The streets were at times crowded with people not just going somewhere, but going about daily life in the street itself. They were more than the vantage point from which much of the city's monumental architecture was experienced; they were adorned themselves with shrines and monuments that were attended by those who used the streets.

There was no "typical" Roman street. Streets varied widely from one another in their physical characteristics and settings. They could be wide (though our sources normally portray them as cramped), narrow, straight, curved, flat, or sloped. Some had porticoes; some had sidewalks. At any one point in time, some would be in good repair and some in poor condition (for a more detailed discussion of the physical differences among urban streets, see Hartnett 2004, 19–23). The character of an individual street depends on more than its physical qualities however; human geography, the use to which people put the street and the mix of people that frequented the street, is equally important. Ancient Italian cities were not highly differentiated according to class, ethnicity, family, or occupation, but Rome was more differentiated than most. Particular areas were known for attracting wealthy residents (e.g. the Quirinal) and others for poorer inhabitants (e.g. the Subura). In the second century BCE, an enclave of Africans gave their name to a neighborhood and street, the Vicus Africus, and in the empire Sulpicii, freedmen of the Sulpicii Galbae and their descendants, walked the streets of the south-west slope of the Aventine where they had settled near the warehouses and granaries of the noble family. Certain businesses might cluster together (e.g. booksellers around the fora and goldsmiths on the Sacra Via; see also Holleran, Chapter 22 in this volume) and affect the character of particular streets. Such segregation was never as extensive in Rome as it is in modern cities, but it had an effect on the people and activities found on individual streets.

Streets and Infrastructure

Sources

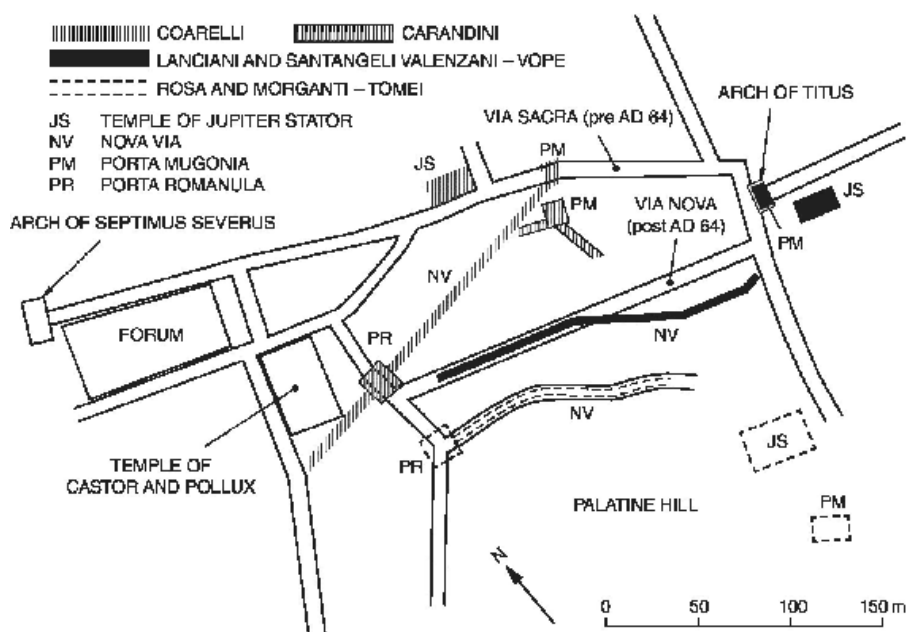
Because they did not involve building up structures subject to destruction by weathering and depredation, and because they did not heavily involve the use of degradable materials like wood, it is reasonable to hope that the streets of Roman cities might be relatively easy to study simply by uncovering their remains. The streets of some Roman cities – for example Pompeii and Timgad in North Africa – are very well known from archaeological investigation. But this is because both Pompeii and Timgad were abandoned and “frozen in time,” safe from the forces of change, disaster, demolition, renewal, expansion, and contraction that are constantly at work on living cities. Rome falls at the other end of the spectrum. It was not just continuously inhabited throughout antiquity, and up to the present, but was also, for much of its history, the special place on which aristocratic, imperial, religious, and fascist dreams were realized through building and renovation. In antiquity, the degree of almost constant change that occurred between the Rome of Romulus and that of Septimius Severus obscures for us many of the specifics of the city at any one point in time. This is as true, if not more true, for streets as it is for other parts of the built urban environment: streets are not just easily added, removed or redirected, but a seemingly static street can have its character changed by changes in the buildings or community that surrounded it without any physical alteration obvious to archaeology.

At Rome, archaeology has uncovered a relatively small percentage of the ancient city, and systematic excavations have focused on the areas around major public monuments (Ricci and Terrenato 1999). Elsewhere excavation has been much more limited, often driven by accidental discovery, and therefore has revealed relatively small sections of pavement, sewers, sidewalks, retaining walls, and roadside buildings that made up the majority of the city. While these are incredibly valuable additions to our knowledge of the ancient city, it is impossible today to stroll at length upon the uncovered streets of ancient Rome the way one can in Pompeii or Timgad. Since Rome’s street layout lacked even a modest amount of regularity, the snippets that have been uncovered cannot be used to extrapolate the whole.

Other kinds of evidence supplement archaeological investigation of the streets themselves. There is a relatively large body of inscriptions that name the street upon which they were placed. Most significant are the inscriptions of the *magistri vici*, officers of official neighborhoods that shared their name with central streets of the city. These inscriptions, when found *in situ*, allow us to

firmly locate at least one point on a particular street. Also, one of the most important topographical resources for ancient Rome, the fragments of the Severan *Forma Urbis Romae*, a large marble map of the city installed on a wall in the Temple of Peace in the early third century CE, shows portions of many of the city's streets. Even if these cannot all be readily matched to specific locations, they provide valuable insight into the organization and general character of the city's streets. Perhaps most helpful, however, are descriptions, both deliberate and passing, of the physical arrangement of the streets in relation to important monuments, other streets, and the historical development of the city found in literary sources.

However, there is still controversy and uncertainty about the basic routes and nature of even the most important streets. The Nova Via provides a useful example both of the changeable nature of a city street and the evidentiary problems that accompany it. In the empire, the name Nova Via was assigned to a straight street running from the Arch of Titus behind the Atrium Vestae. This street, which was not evidently a central thoroughfare, was only created during the rebuilding of the area after it was destroyed by the great fire of 64 CE. However, despite its name, the Nova Via was, in an earlier incarnation, one of the oldest and most important central thoroughfares in the Republican city (Varro *Ling.* 6.59). Although recent excavations may have unearthed sections of pavement from the Republican street, our understanding of this earlier Nova Via depends mostly on references to the street in literature in connection with other important landmarks.¹ It evidently began at one of the gates to the "Romulean" city, the Porta Mugonia on the north-east slope of the Palatine that was located in later times near the temple of Jupiter Stator (Livy 1.41.4; Pliny *HN* 34.29; Plut. *Mor.* 273B). It ran around the northern slope of the Palatine above the shrine of Vesta (Cic. *Div.* 1.101; Livy 5.32.6; Ov. *Fast.* 6.395–400) and into the swampy Velabrum, the valley between the NW Palatine and the Capitol, where it ended through the Porta Romana at the dock for the Aventine ferry (Varro *Ling.* 5.43, 5.164, 6.24; Festus 318 L). It doesn't help that gates, swamp, and ferry were all gone by the late Republic. Of the three topographical references to the Republican city, only the Temple of Vesta can be securely located. The extent of the area called Velabrum is unclear, and the location of the temple of Jupiter Stator is controversial. As a result, three different possibilities for the route of the Nova Via, based on different hypotheses about the location of the reference monuments, have been put forward (Map 11).



Map 11 Map showing possible locations of the pre-Neronian Nova Via. (From Hurst and Cirone 2003, 23 fig. 4).

Planning and the Street System

They will ridicule and despise Rome, placed amid mountains and valleys, with its tall and overhanging attics and its less than perfect roads, and very narrow streets, in comparison with their own Capua spread out on a flat plain and most beautifully situated.

(Cic. Leg. Agr. 2.96).

In his public speech opposing a proposed land law that would have resettled Capua and Campania with Roman colonists, Cicero uses a common insecurity of the late Republic – that Rome was not the equal in grandeur of many of its subject cities – in an attempt to turn public opinion against the law by suggesting that the new colonists would laugh at the condition of their mother city after they saw Capua. A quick comparison of the street plans of Rome and Pompeii reveals some truth to Cicero's comment.

While Pompeii was far from regular, the basic principle of a grid of streets

forming city blocks is clear. The street system of the capital, on the other hand, does not appear to have been laid out systematically according to any principle or rule at all. Rather, the streets of Rome, big and small, seem remarkably confused and irregular, following routes dictated by the original topography of the site – the city of seven hills was obviously not built on a plain – and by tracks and settlement patterns that predated the unified urbanization of the city.

Greek colonists had introduced Italy to the “street grid” as a principal of good urban planning as early as the fifth century BCE, and there were numerous well-known Hellenistic examples from later. From the Greek example, the Romans themselves developed a set of urban planning guidelines that included an orthogonal street grid, which is most clearly seen in new colonial foundations. The Roman colony at Cosa, founded in the early third century BCE, had a regular street grid, and Luni, founded in 177 BCE, even more so. The grid at Pompeii was the result of rebuilding by the Roman colonists settled there by Sulla after the Social War. Eventually a highly regular but still flexible urban design was developed for new Roman settlements: a square city bisected by two primary roads perpendicular to one another, the *Cardo* and the *Decumanus*, with an orthogonal plan of city blocks broken only by major public buildings. The Trajanic foundation of Timgad (Thaumagras) in North Africa is the purest example of this type of planned Roman city, which evidently owed much to the layout of Roman military encampments.

Rome itself, however, was never a model for such regularity of streets. The basic layout of the city predated the Romans’ knowledge and adoption of orthogonal street grids. And the site of Rome would not easily have accommodated one anyway. Nevertheless, by the late Republic, comparison with the great cities of the Hellenistic world convinced the Romans that their capital’s irregular pattern of narrow streets was a disgrace that required explanation. Livy (5.55) provided a general explanation and apology for the city’s irregularity in the face of its regular neighbors. He claimed that when the Romans decided not to abandon Rome after the Gauls had destroyed the city in 390 BCE, they rebuilt the city with a focus on speed rather than careful planning: “they sacrificed care in arranging the streets to haste... and this is the reason... that the shape of the city resembles more a settlement than a planned city.”

Aristocratic builders, who never felt a particular need to harmonize their monumental donations with those of their present and historical rivals, compounded the irregularity of the streets throughout the Republic. The development of a long-term “master plan” was impossible, and haphazard buildings required haphazard streets to accommodate them. In the empire as well, the focus was on self-contained monumental building rather than on the general reimagining of sections of the city that, despite providing an opportunity to redraw the street map, would have required the demolition of

large amounts of private property, which was never popular.

Nevertheless, opportunities to rebuild whole sections of the city's street grid with more care did occasionally present themselves. Most importantly, after the great fire of 64 CE burned a large portion of the central city, Nero rebuilt "not haphazardly as after the Gallic sack but with measured arrangement of streets and with wider spaces for roads." Tacitus goes on to complain that people preferred the old streets since the new streets were too wide to offer any shade (*Ann.* 15.43). The creation of the new Nova Via discussed above was part of this post-fire rebuilding. Revision of the streets and street system continued throughout the empire whenever the opportunity arose, but the street system of Rome throughout the Republic and empire remained mostly an irregular, organic, and narrow jumble.

Names and Addresses

A resident in a modern American city encounters city streets called streets, avenues, drives, roads, lanes, places, and boulevards, to name a few. This jumble of English words for "city street" is not easy to differentiate. Sometimes "avenue" or "boulevard" may signal larger, more important streets while "lane" and "place" signal smaller, more local routes. Sometimes the names depend on an artificial scheme such as the north-south avenues and east-west streets of Manhattan. But just as often there is no clear reason why one word was preferred over another, and there are certainly large roads called "drives" (e.g. Lake Shore Drive in Chicago) and small residential streets called avenues or boulevards. The Romans had, over time, an equal variety of words for their city streets, including *via*, *platea*, *vicus*, *clivus*, *semitae*, *scalae*, and *angiportum*. Just as in modern cities, it is not always entirely clear why one was preferred over another in any instance and no precise scheme can be shown to clearly differentiate among the various words.

Generally, *viae* alone could be used to refer to all the streets of the city. It could also be paired with *semitae* or *angiporta*, in which case *viae* must mean the larger streets and *semitae* or *angiporta* the smaller streets. For example, Martial (7.61.3–4) suggests that Domitian had widened the *semitae* of the city until they were all *viae*. *Vici* too could stand by itself or be paired with *angiporta* or *semitae* to refer to all the streets of the city (*Vicus* by itself: e.g. Tac. *Ann.* 15.38; with *angiporta*: e.g. Cic. *Mil.* 64). Even *angiporta*, made famous in Catullus 58, might be used generally to refer to all the city streets, although normally the word seems to have excluded the largest streets. Catullus (58.4–5) pairs *angiporta* and *quadrivia* (*nunc in quadriviis et angiportis*) to mean "on the crossroads and the side streets." *Semitae* were always smaller streets, but they should not be thought of as "paths" rather than streets based on the rural origins of the word. *Platea*, common in Terence and

Plautus and in the later empire, was a loan-word from Greek, like English's borrowing of "boulevard" from the French. A *clivus* was a street that climbed a slope, but even this was not specific: in poetry the Sacra Via could be called the Sacer Clivus.

Most of the individual streets in Rome did not have discrete names. Only two streets in the Republican city were called *viae*, and both had specific names Sacra Via and Nova Via (discussed above). These were old thoroughfares that ran through the center of the city. Otherwise, named *viae* were the trunk roads that connected the cities of the empire (see Rice, [Chapter 9](#) in this volume). There was only one named *semita* in the city, Alta Semita, "High Street," running along the ridge of the Quirinal. This, too, was evidently an old route that maintained its traditional name. Special names, like Argiletum, the street that connected the fora with the Subura to the north-east were likewise probably the kinds of traditional holdovers that gave ancient etymologists fits (cf. Varro *Ling.* 5. 157). We also know of several named *clivi* (e.g. Clivus Capitolinus) and a few named *scalae* (e.g. Scalae Gemoniae) but no named *angiporta* in the city.

Most of the individual street names we know were *vici*. We know the names of around a hundred individual *vici*. These named *vici*, however, were not just, or perhaps even primarily, streets. They were neighborhoods (or wards or quarters) that encompassed a main street and the surrounding blocks and side streets. The first emperor Augustus created an official division of the city into *vici* for social and administrative purposes, and we know the names of the *vici* from monuments of the neighborhoods not from street signs or maps. So our references are often to the neighborhood (including side streets) rather than to an individual street, though the main street in each *vicus* often shared a name with the neighborhood. However, even if we equate the roughly 265 (Pliny gives this number for *compita* in the Flavian age) named *vici* with individual streets, this still leaves the vast majority of streets in the city with no specific, official names.

In modern cities the primary reasons for officially naming individual streets and numbering the buildings is to enable easier navigation through the city to and from specific locations (the impetus may have begun with the modern post office). Until recently this has required both accurate maps with street names and regular signage to identify streets by name (and buildings by number) – GPS navigation has changed the need for paper maps and public signage. Since most streets at Rome did not have specific names, and since there is no evidence for signage designed to identify streets names at Rome or in any other better-preserved Roman city like Pompeii, the question arises: how did people navigate the streets to find a particular location? A passage from Terence's *Adelphoi* (574–583), although comic, provides some help:

I can't tell you the name of the person he's visiting, but I know where he lives.

DEMEA

Tell me the place then.

SYRUS

Do you know the portico down that way, next to the market?

DEMEA

Of course.

SYRUS

Go straight past it up the street (*platea*). Next, there is a street (*clivus*) that goes down the opposite slope. Go straight down that. Next on this side of the street there is a shrine and close by it a side street (*angiportum*).

DEMEA

Which one?

SYRUS

The one by the big fig-tree.

DEMEA

OK.

SYRUS

Go down that –

DEMEA

But that street is a dead end (*id angiportum est non pervium*).

SYRUS

By god, you're right; Damn, you must think I'm crazy? I made a mistake. Start again from the portico; indeed that will be a shorter and less roundabout route. Do you know the house of Cratinus, the rich man?

DEMEA

Yes.

SYRUS

When you have passed that, go straight down the street (*platea*) to the left; when you come to the Temple of Diana, turn right; before you come to the gate, just by the pond, there is a bakery and across the street a workshop. He is there.

In the passage the slave Syrus provides purposefully confusing directions to Demea who is seeking his brother. His directions are supposed to be baffling and time consuming, but the joke works only if the urban audience can identify with the situation. In his directions Syrus uses *platea*, *clivus*, and *angiportum* to refer to unnamed streets, but relies primarily on landmarks known to both of them (a portico, a market, a fig tree, a famous house, a temple, a gate, a pond, a bakery) to provide directions. There is no street number for the workshop Demea is to seek out.

In general, Romans seem to have navigated the streets by reference not to specific streets, but to the neighborhoods (or wards or quarters) into which Rome and other cities like Pompeii seem to have been divided. At Rome and Pompeii, these neighborhoods often took their names from distinctive landmarks like a gate or temple that people might be expected to know the location of. The reference landmark and the monuments of the neighborhood would allow a traveler to know he was in the right neighborhood and then he could ask for directions, hopefully better than Syrus's, to find specific locations.

Administration and Maintenance

The city supervisors should take care that they permit neither fighting nor tossing out dung or carcasses or skins in the street.

(Papinian in *Dig.* 68.10.4–5)

General responsibility for the streets fell to city officials, although the exact group of officers involved changed considerably over time (for more detailed discussion, see Robinson 1992, 59–79). The earliest known paving at Rome, which may roughly coincide with an increased need for the state to manage construction and maintenance of the streets, dates to 238 BCE. In 174 the censors let a contract to pave all the city streets (Livy 41.27.5–8). Though specifics are rare, it was probably the censors who regularly had charge of contracting most major street construction before the late Republic, but it was the aediles who managed most aspects of city administration, evidently

including maintenance and cleaning of the streets (Cic. *Leg.* 3.7; *Dig.* 1.2.26, cf. Cic. *Verr.* 2.36)

Our knowledge of street repair and maintenance from the late Republic to the Severan city is bracketed by two important texts: sections of the *Tabula Heracleensis* (Dessau, *ILS* 6,085 = Riccobono, *FIRA* I2.12, hereafter *Tab. Herac.*) dealing with Rome; and selections from the Severan jurist Papinian's *Astynomikos* preserved in the *Digest* with a Latin translation (43.10.1). The *Tab. Herac.* records excerpts of various Roman laws dealing with the city, including sections on the repair, maintenance, and cleaning of the streets (ll. 20–52, §7–13; for the *Tab. Herac.*, see Fredericksen 1965, Mueller 1965). According to the *Tab. Herac.*, the four aediles divide the city among themselves, each taking individual responsibility for ensuring the upkeep of the streets in his allotted region (20–22). Individuals whose property fronts on city streets are required to maintain (*tueri*) the street in front of their property to the aedile's satisfaction (22–23). If a property owner fails to do so, the aedile is to have the street repaired and bill the property owner for the work (32–46). In Papinian, violators are fined rather than billed. Sections of street that front on public property are maintained at public expense (29–31). The aediles are also charged with cleaning the streets and junior helpers, *quattuorviri viis in urbe purgandis* (later the *quattuorviri viarum curandarum*), were assigned to them to manage this task.

Augustus revised the arrangement, dividing the city into fourteen regions, each assigned to an aedile, tribune, or praetor (Cass. Dio 55.8.6), but the aediles continued to be associated with street cleaning, as shown by the story of Caligula in 38 CE dumping mud down the toga of the current aedile and future emperor Vespasian because the streets were dirty (Cass. Dio 59.12; Suet. *Vesp.* 5). Augustus's system of semi-independent magistrates (who had other duties in addition to the *cura regionum*) did not allow for any centralized administration of the city's streets and also created a potential conflict between the individual Regionary magistrates and the Urban Prefect, who had authority on the emperor's behalf over the entire city. At some point, the Regionary magistrates were replaced with supervisors (*curatores*) and directly subordinated to Urban Prefect. When exactly the change took place is unknown, but the final testimony for a Regionary magistrate is 109 CE.

People on the Streets

Going Places

In this city sleep costs millions, and that's the root of the trouble. The wagons thundering past through those narrow twisting streets, the oaths of draymen caught in a traffic-jam, would rouse a dozing seal – or emperor. If the tycoon has an appointment, he rides there in a big litter, the crowd parting before him. There's plenty of room inside: he can read, or take notes, or snooze as he jogs along – those drawn blinds are most soporific. Even so he outstrips us: however fast we pedestrians may hurry crowds surge ahead, those behind us buffet my rib cage, poles poke into me; one lout swings a crossbeam down on my skull, another scores with a barrel. My legs are mud-encrusted, from all sides big feet kick me, a hobnailed soldier's boot lands squarely on my toes.

(Juv. 3.235–48, transl. Green)

In Rome nearly everyone had to venture out onto the streets daily for some reason or another. Juvenal reveals a few of these reasons: to deliver goods, to attend the Forum, to visit a friend or patron, to fulfill a military assignment. Other reasons linked to basic survival can be deduced for the people that made up Juvenal's *populus*. Water was not distributed to most homes or apartments in the city, so regular visits to public fountains were required; food, too, had to be obtained daily either as provisions or in a *taberna*. Visiting a bathhouse regularly was important for both hygiene and social interaction. Wealthier residents who had water and kitchens in their homes needed to venture out for business and to participate in a culture of visiting that pervaded Roman urban society above its lowest levels. For example, performing the *salutatio*, when clients attended patrons at their homes in the morning, or attending the evening dinners (*cenae*) that so concerned Martial, required daily travel on the streets.

The Street as Destination

The streets were more than simply conduits for travel. A remarkable array of public and private functions occurred on the city's streets (See Hartnett 2004, 33–40; Holleran 2011). Street performers, beggars, teachers, and prostitutes all went out into the streets regularly to make a living. Such activities could even interfere with using the streets as conduits for travel. For instance, when Martial (7.61.7–10) praises Domitian for widening *semitae* into *viae*, he suggests that it was necessary because businesses in the streets had expanded to take up the whole area, to the detriment of people actually going places: “The barber no longer works amidst a dense crowd, nor does the filthy vendor take up the whole street; barber, shopkeeper, cook, and butcher stick to their own spaces. Now it is Rome, before it was a big shop.”

On the other end of the social spectrum, the grand funerals of patrician families and their imitators required a parade (*pompa*) through the streets to move the corpse from home to tomb (stopping by the Forum if a *laudatio funebris* was to be given). Such funeral processions were complex performances in the streets. The parade was led by musicians, next came female mourners, then actors who portrayed scenes from the deceased's life, next the slaves freed by the deceased, then actors wearing *imagines* and imitating the deceased's important ancestors, then the body carried on a decorated litter, and finally the living relations. If the funeral were held at public expense, the urban populace would be invited by heralds to watch the parade, but even for private funerals one can imagine a crowd turning out to line the route. When the body of Augustus's adopted son Lucius Caesar was returned to Rome at night in 2 CE the urban populace lined the streets holding candles to watch the procession pass by (*Inscr. Ital.* 13.1.181–182).

The street was an important space for public as well as private activities. The triumph, like patrician funerals, involved a parade and used the streets as a stage to celebrate a general's victory. As with modern parades, we can imagine the populace turning out into the street and lining the parade route to watch the spectacle. More regularly than triumphs, a number of important state religious rituals were performed using the streets of the city. For example, on Lupercalia, after the sacrifice, the priests of Faunus (the *luperci*) ran through the streets chasing people and hitting them with thongs cut from the hides of the sacrificial victims (Wiseman 1995). A blow was supposed to ensure fertility for the coming year, so women hoping to conceive turned out to be struck. Lupercalia is portrayed as a raucous, crowded street carnival (Plut. *Caes.* 61, Cic. *Cael.* 26; Livy 1.5.2). At the beginning and end of the campaign season, the Salii, priests of Mars and Quirinus danced a complex dance and sang a traditional song through the streets of the city to ensure martial and economic prosperity.

Example of a Street Club: *Vici* and Compitalia²

Between 12 and 7 BCE the first emperor Augustus implemented a new comprehensive scheme for organizing the space of Rome, restructuring the city into fourteen regions and numerous neighborhoods (Suet. *Aug.* 30, Cass. Dio 55.8.6). These divisions were based at least to some degree in existing patterns that dated back to the third century BCE and they persisted until the sixth century CE.

The antiquarian Dionysius of Halicarnassus writing in the reign of Augustus and undoubtedly influenced by Augustus's action, describes the origin and nature of the neighborhood clubs:

After this he (King Servius) commanded the inhabitants of every neighborhood to erect in the streets shrines to heroes whose statues stood in front of the houses, and he made a law that there should be annual sacrifices there and that each family should contribute a honey-cake. He also ordered that slaves should assist at the sacrifices performed on behalf of the neighborhood, since the service of slaves was pleasing to the heroes. The Romans continued in my day to celebrate Compitalia – so named after *compita*, which is a word for street – in the most solemn and sumptuous manner a few days after the Saturnalia. And they still observe the ancient custom in connection with those sacrifices, propitiating the heroes by the ministry of their servants, and during these days removing every badge of their servitude, in order that the slaves, being softened by this instance of humanity, which has something great and solemn about it, may make themselves more agreeable to their masters and be less sensible of the severity of their condition. (*Ant. Rom.* 4.14.3–4)

There may be doubt about the regal origin of the neighborhoods, but there is no doubt that *vici*, alongside other division such as *montes* and *pagi*, existed in the Republican city as quasi-official divisions of the urban space and populace (cf. Fraschetti 1994, 190–200; Lott 2004). The neighborhoods were the center of the worship of the *Lares Compitales* or *Viales*, practiced neighborhood-by-neighborhood (*vicatim*) at crossroads shrines (*compita*) during the celebration of the midwinter holiday of Compitalia. This cult was, as Dionysius says, the purview of Rome's lower classes, the *infima plebs*, who came together around Compitalia for games and entertainments organized by neighborhood leaders.

The Augustan reform created a much more universal and structured neighborhood system. Neighborhood officers (*magistri vici*) were chosen from each neighborhood's residents, usually four per year. Sometimes a second college of servile *ministri vici* attended the freed *magistri*. The *magistri* had the right to wear the special togas of civic magistrates and to be preceded by lictors, and the officers of several neighborhoods proudly presented themselves wearing their togas and using lictors on altars that they had donated to their neighborhoods (Figure 12.1).



Figure 12.1 Altar of the Vicus Aesuleti showing *magistri vici* sacrificing and with an inscription identifying the area of the neighborhood (Rome, Museo Nuovo, inv. 855; photograph: DAI neg. 60.1472).

Source: Koppermann, DAI neg. 60.1472.

The new neighborhoods and their officers now played an important role in the city's administration. They were charged with helping to control fires and to manage the local distribution points for the city's water supply. Numerous neighborhood dedications from around the city to the goddess who stopped fires, Stata Mater, attest that the neighborhood officers took their new duty

seriously. However, the celebration of Compitalia continued to be the primary focus of neighborhood activity, now joined with the commemoration of the emperor and imperial dynasty. The Lares Compitales or Viales were renamed the Lares Augusti, in honor of the emperor. In some instances the worship of the Genius Caesarum was added as well. The *magistri* from across the city came together annually to parade with their statuettes as part of the Ludi Augustales instituted after the first emperor's death.

The Augustan compital clubs had a profound effect on the streetscape of the city. In addition to new altars like that of the Vicus Aesculeti mentioned above, neighborhoods erected new, more elaborate *aediculae*. In 1932, construction of the Via dei Fori Imperiali unearthed the podium, steps, and portions of the inscribed architrave of the *aedicula* of the Vicus Compiti Acili. The *compitum* stood on the edge of the district called Carinae, above the head of the Sacra Via, in the middle of the road at the intersection of two major streets.

Not every *vicus* would have built such an elaborate *aedicula*, but dedications from throughout the city show that the streetscape of the city was substantially altered by the activities of the neighborhoods. From one neighborhood on the south-west slope of the Aventine no less than ten monuments (statues and the like) are known to have been erected in the neighborhood by its *magistri vici* (Lott 2004, 152–161).

Conclusion

Streets must be examined as both artifacts and communities at the same time. They draw meaning equally from the people who used them (the *magister vici*, the religious celebrants, the person fetching water, the *dives* going to the Forum), their physical form, and their mental associations. Rome's streets were far from permanent artifacts of the city; they were changeable and changing. Sometimes these changes were physical (such as rebuilding or rerouting), sometimes it was the character of the street rather than its physical nature that changed. Rome's streets were public spaces, protected by the state administration against private encroachment and open to all. Thus, streets also provided a venue for various kinds of uncontrolled interaction at close quarters among the different classes of urban residents of Rome. As public spaces, they also provided both structure and place for organizations who lacked access to the great public buildings of the city.

Guide to Further Reading

For a basic sense of the streets as part of the overall city, see the relevant sections of Robinson 1992; Stambaugh 1988. For sources on particular streets, see the entries in the *LTUR* or in Richardson's *New Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome* (less detailed, but with entries in English). For collections of literary sources, see Lugli 1952; Dudley 1967 (with English translations, but with little on streets). For the names of Roman streets, see Harsh 1937. For the Severan marble plan, which is key to understanding the layout of city streets and surrounding buildings, see Reynolds 1996, Rodríguez Almeida 1981, Carettoni 1960. For a recent interpretation of street life, outside of Rome itself, see Hartnett 2004. For finding your way and giving directions, see Ling 1990; Llewelyn 1994. For maintenance and administration, see Robinson 1992, 59–79; For the neighborhoods, Frascchetti 1994; Lott 2004.

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ENDNOTE

1. For a general discussion of the Nova Via with bibliography, see *LTUR* 3 s.v. Nova Via; for the recent excavations, Hurst and Cirone 2003; for the literary evidence, Wiseman 2004.
2. For a new treatment of Compitalia and neighborhood collegia, see now Flower 2017, which came out too late to be consulted for this paper.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Urban Administration in Rome

John R. Patterson

Introduction

Between 200 BCE and the Principate of Augustus, it can be estimated that the population of the city of Rome grew – very roughly – from some 200,000 to something in the region of a million (Lo Cascio 2000, and [Chapter 6](#) in this volume): a city of this scale presented problems of organization and control unique in antiquity, a situation made even more serious by the wide variety of potential hazards to which its population was exposed on a regular basis (see Aldrete, [Chapter 17](#) in this volume). The densely packed residential areas, the widespread use of wood and other flammable materials in building, and the reliance of the city's inhabitants on oil lamps and charcoal stoves for lighting and heating, meant that fire was an ever-present danger (Sablayrolles 1996, 409–68). The low-lying districts of the city were regularly inundated by the Tiber in flood (Alldrete 2007); the removal of the city's waste presented major difficulties, as did the disposal of the dead, especially given Rome's high levels of mortality (Scobie 1986). Providing a reliable supply of food for the city's vast population was likewise fundamental to its day-to-day stability: while the provision of free grain for resident male citizens, initiated by P. Clodius Pulcher as tribune of the plebs in 58 BCE, represented a major step forward in that respect, organizing the distribution of this state largesse to hundreds of thousands of people had major administrative consequences (see Geraci, [Chapter 10](#) in this volume). While life in ancient Rome was, we may assume, always characterized by a high level of casual violence, the level of insecurity was aggravated in the final decades of the Republican period by rising tensions within the political elite (Nippel 1995; Lintott 1999b). The scale of the practical challenges facing the city's rulers was thus immense. This chapter examines the strategies devised by the Roman authorities to deal with this range of problems, and how these developed in response both to changing practical realities and the political transformation of the Roman state from Republic to Principate.

The Republican System in Outline

One fundamental point which deserves to be underlined at the outset is that it

is only with the widespread extension of Roman citizenship to the population of Italy in the years following the Social War that the notion of an “urban administration” becomes a significant one. Before then, Rome was conceptualized as a city-state, and issues relating to Rome (as city) were to a great extent indistinguishable from those relating to the *res publica* as a whole (Robinson 1992, 2). Hence the control of the city was entrusted to the magistrates of the Roman state.

Many construction projects at Rome using state funds were initiated and administered by the censors, one of whose major duties was the letting out of public contracts (Polyb. 6.17.2 with Lintott 1999a, 119–20). Once constructed, however, the maintenance of these and other public buildings normally lay in the hands of the aediles, whose responsibilities in the city (or *cura urbis*) were very wide-ranging. As well as the upkeep of the urban infrastructure, including the roads and sewers, the oversight of markets and of the city’s food supply, and the organization of public festivals and games, they seem to have had responsibilities in relation to law and order in the city, in which role they were supported by junior magistrates known as *tresviri capitales* (Lintott 1999a, 129–33).

There were only four aediles, and the aedileship was thus a particularly weighty responsibility, though one which, if successfully carried out, could establish a high political profile for an ambitious individual; the provision of games was particularly important from this point of view. Special initiatives taken by the aediles, such as the purchase of additional corn in times of food shortage, might also bring political benefits (Garnsey 1988, 196–7, 208–11). However, in a particularly difficult situation (such as periodically occurred with the corn supply), a designated individual might be appointed to take personal charge of the relevant area, as occurred twice in ten years in the case of Pompey. In 67 BCE he was appointed to a command against the pirates who (among other problems) were causing serious disruption to the corn supply, and in 57 BCE shortages resulting from Clodius’s free distributions of grain led to Pompey again being given special responsibility in this area. Such appointments (and indeed the state provision of grain more generally) were unpopular among many senators, as they were felt to lead to undue influence for individuals within the elite. Traditionalists felt that the traditional structures of patronage, by which individual members of the elite would provide support for their own clients, were a more appropriate way of resolving such difficulties, being less disruptive of the social and political order (Garnsey 1988, 197). However, the more the city’s population grew, the less realistic it was to think that informal patronage structures would be able to support more than a tiny minority of its inhabitants, or that the aediles on their own would be able to resolve the multiple difficulties with which they were faced.

Caesar and Augustus

Following decades of political upheaval and disorder in the city, the advent of one-man rule – first the dictatorship of Caesar and then the Principate of Augustus – provided an opportunity for a radical rethinking of how to tackle the extensive practical problems increasingly being raised by city administration. It also entailed the concentration of power essential for implementing this successfully. That both Caesar and Augustus were keen on ambitious schemes is clear from their respective building projects and a range of other initiatives attested by the ancient sources, whether actually implemented or just planned. For example, one of Caesar's major achievements was the total reorganization of the calendar (Suet. *Iul.* 40); by contrast plans to divert the Tiber southwards, to enter the sea near Tarracina, which would have provided for a safer access to Rome for boats carrying grain, and to build a vast theatre next to the Capitol below the Tarpeian Rock, did not come to fruition (Plu., *Caes.* 58.8). A legal text inscribed on a bronze tablet, found at Heraclea in southern Italy (and hence known as the *Tabula Heracleensis* (*Tab. Herac.*)), preserves a series of provisions for urban administration in Rome usually dated to Caesar's dictatorship. These include arrangements for the maintenance of the city's roads, and restrictions on movement of wagons through the urban area (*Tab. Herac.* 1–82).

Another of Caesar's initiatives was to collect information about those eligible for state grain distributions (which he reduced from 320, 000 to 150, 000) “by neighborhoods (*vicatim*), through the owners of apartment blocks (*insulae*)” (Suet. *Iul.* 41), a technique which was subsequently used by Augustus too, again in the context of the grain distributions (Suet. *Aug.* 40.2). Caesar's new technique for collecting information suggests that the population of the city was now seen as a body of people who needed to be organized and controlled. The Republican census traditionally categorized citizens by tribe and according to their wealth, in a process which reflected the essentially military aim of the exercise, as was indicated also by the sculptural representation of the census on the Altar of Domitius Ahenobarbus (Brunt 1971, 15–16; Torelli 1982, 5–15). By contrast, this new way of proceeding categorized the people of Rome as inhabitants of their city, rather than as a subsection of the broader *populus Romanus* (Nicolet 1991, 196–8; Wallace-Hadrill 2008, 290–93). The *Tabula Heracleensis* also seems to suggest that the aediles had access to information about ownership of properties in Rome (Nicolet 1991, 197). A fragment of a first century CE marble plan, discovered close to Via Anicia (in the Trastevere district of the city) in 1983, and depicting a section of the bank of the Tiber close to the Temple of Castor and Pollux in the Circus Flaminius, records names apparently indicating who owned which properties, and also marks distances along the riverbank. The document may be related to the activities of the *curatores riparum et alvei Tiberis*, who were responsible for the maintenance of the river's channel (Rodríguez Almeida 2002, 43–9), and

in any case indicates the remarkable extent of information about private properties and their owners in official hands by that stage (Wallace-Hadrill 2008, 304–7).

Augustus, too, instituted a significant reorganization of the city. According to Varro, the city was divided into four regions under the Republic (Suburana, Esquilina, Collina, Palatina), corresponding to the four urban voting tribes (Varro *Ling.* 5.45, 56 with Fraschetti 1990, 181–92; Fraschetti 1999a), but it seems that in 7 BCE Rome was formally organized into 14 *regiones* (regions), which were in turn subdivided into *vici* (neighborhoods), each of which had its own magistrates, *magistri vici*. Across the city there were some 265 *compita Larum* (neighborhood shrines), each of which apparently corresponded to a *vicus* (Suet. *Aug.* 30; Plin. *HN* 3.66 with Fraschetti 1990, 255–68; Nicolet 1991, 194–204; Tarpin 2002, 137–44; Lott 2004, 87–127; Wallace-Hadrill 2008, 275–90). Each of the fourteen *regiones* was placed under the oversight of a praetor, tribune or aedile (Cass. Dio 55.8), just as the different parts of the Republican city had been assigned to the supervision of individual aediles (*Tab. Herac.* 24–8). At some point in the early second century CE these magistrates were replaced by regional *curatores* (Fraschetti 1999b). While the Severan marble plan of Rome (see Tucci, Chapter Iiii in this volume) can perhaps best be seen as a monument of imperial power rather than as a practical document (Trimble 2007), it is striking that its layout, with *Regio I* (Porta Capena, where the Via Appia entered the city) appearing at the top, seems to reflect the Augustan system for the organization of the city. Likewise its scale, at 1:240, is the same as that of the Via Anicia plan, which does appear to have had more of a specifically administrative purpose (Rodríguez Almeida 2002, 43–9; Trimble 2007, 378–80). The *regiones* had an impact on the city’s topographical layout too. A monumental fountain known as the Meta Sudans was set up under Augustus, on the slopes of the Palatine, close to where the Colosseum was later to be constructed, and then rebuilt in the Flavian period: it marked the location where several of the Augustan *regiones* met (Panella 2006).

The creation of the fourteen *regiones*, and the *vici* associated with them, can be seen as reflecting both the changing reality of the city of Rome, and the concern of Rome’s rulers to establish firm control over the urban population. Just as it was now thought appropriate for the population of Rome to be enumerated as a separate entity, the definition of the city was becoming more of an issue. Augustus’s new *regiones* bore no relation to the traditional limits of the city of Rome, either the *pomerium* (ritual boundary) or the “Servian wall” which defined the Republican city; instead, they extended to include the built-up area of the city, reflecting the reality of the city’s urban sprawl, rather than any more theoretically defined limit (Frézouls 1987, 374–5). In the same way, the Caesarian legislation preserved in the *Tabula Heracleensis* related to roads “within the city of Rome or closer to the city of Rome than one mile

where there will be continuous habitation” (*Tab. Herac.* 20). The incorporation of *vici* within the administrative system of Augustan Rome also represented a significant step towards reinforcing imperial control over the metropolis. In the mid-Republican period, the *vici* had on occasion been used as a mechanism for the distribution of grain and other benefits by the aediles to the urban population, for example in 213 and 203 BCE (e.g. Livy 25.2.8–10, 30.26.5–6, with Lott 2004, 41), but by the time of the late Republic they had become strongly associated with the disorder initiated by Clodius and the *collegia* (popular associations) loyal to him (Wallace-Hadrill 2008, 266–8). *Collegia* in the city were repeatedly banned, in 64 BCE, by Caesar, and then by Augustus; their role as a focus for organization and local identity in the neighborhoods of the city was however replaced by the *vici*, which, with their shrines dedicated to the Lares Augusti, were intended to be a source of loyalty to the regime rather than a hotbed of subversion and instability. In 33 BCE, Octavian sought to reinforce the loyalty of the inhabitants of Rome by encouraging M. Agrippa to serve as aedile (even though he had already been consul four years previously), repairing the streets, public buildings, sewers and water supply of Rome (Cass. Dio. 49. 43 with Shipley 1933, 20–34; Lott 2004, 70). The creation of the *regiones* and the *vici* can be seen as a further step in that direction.

The Imperial system

The advent of imperial rule brought about a more systematic pattern of urban administration than had existed under the Republic, though it is worth underlining that this was a gradual, and not always orderly, process (Levick 2010, 143). Suetonius records how Augustus created a new series of offices with responsibility for the *cura* of different aspects of the administration of the city: public buildings, the water supply, the banks and the channel of the Tiber, and the corn supply (Suet. *Aug.* 37 with Bruun 1991, 141–2; Daguet-Gagey 2000). Prefects, equestrian or senatorial, were also appointed, to take command of new military or paramilitary forces based in the city: the Prefect of the *vigiles* (night watch), the Praetorian Prefect, and the Urban Prefect. While the importance of the aediles was reduced, they nevertheless still had a role to play in the city, as we will see. The sections which follow examine arrangements for dealing with fires, measures relating to law and order in the city, and other administrative provisions under the Principate, and how these related to Republican practice. Some key features of urban administration (e.g. relating to the corn supply, the aqueducts, and the Tiber) are however not discussed in detail here, because specific chapters are dedicated to them elsewhere in the volume. It is worth stressing that we tend to know more

about those in charge of different sectors of administration, than those who actually carried out the work on the ground, or where the latter were based in the city: Frontinus tells us about the gangs of slaves under the control of the *curator aquarum* (Aq. 116–18), but where their headquarters was, if indeed there was any such thing, is much less clear (see Bruun 1991, 195–6, Burgers 1999, and Coarelli 2000 for differing views). Much remains obscure about the day-to-day operation of Rome’s city administration.

Fires

Under the Republic, we are informed by the *Digest*, the control of fires was in the hands of the *triumviri nocturni*, another name for the *tresviri capitales* (on whom see further below). These were supported in their work by a squad of public slaves, stationed around the city walls and gates, but also by privately organized groups, which apparently intervened to put out fires “*vel mercede vel gratia*” “for payment or as a favor” (*Dig.* 1.15.1). A comparison may perhaps be drawn with the volunteer fire brigades of New York in the mid nineteenth century, whose links with city politics, and propensity for fighting one another, became notorious (Asbury 1928, 28–9). Both late-Republican Rome and nineteenth-century New York were densely packed cities characterized by large scale migration, but also plagued by often politically inspired gang violence. We may doubt how effectively this system of firefighting functioned: one group of *triumviri* were condemned at a trial before the people for arriving too late at the scene of a fire on the Via Sacra (Val. Max. 8.1 *damnati* 5), but interestingly Valerius Maximus includes this episode among instances of individuals condemned “for frivolous reasons,” which suggests their firefighting responsibilities were not always regarded very seriously. In 22 BCE one of the aediles, Egnatius Rufus, recruited slaves and created a force of firefighters from his own resources; as a result he became so popular that he was elected to the praetorship immediately afterwards. His attempt to stand for the consulship at the elections in 19 BCE, again contrary to tradition, was blocked by the consul for that year: Egnatius, described by Velleius as “more like a gladiator than a senator” (Vell. Pat. 2.91.3) was alleged to have plotted to assassinate Augustus, and in a series of events reminiscent of the Catilinarian conspiracy of 63 BCE was arrested and executed (Raaflaub and Samons 1990, 427; Woodman 1993, 271–4). Augustus instructed the aediles again to take on the role of guarding against fire in the city and a force of 600 slaves was established to help them (Cass. Dio 54.2.4), but when the *regiones* were created in 7 BCE, firefighting was then apparently entrusted to the *magistri vici* (Cass. Dio 55. 8. 6–7). It was however only in 6 CE, with the establishment of the new force of *vigiles*, that an effective long-term solution to the problem of dealing with fires in the city

was put in place (Cass. Dio. 55.26.4; Strabo 5.3.7; *Dig.* 1.15.3, with Robinson 1992, 105–6; Sablayrolles 1996, 6–24).

Seven cohorts of *vigiles* were established, recruited from freedmen, which altogether formed a force of some 3,900 men (see Aldrete, Chapter 17 in this volume); early in the third century CE, the numbers of men per cohort were doubled, and the manpower of the force thus expanded to some 7,000 (Rainbird 1986, 150–51). Their principal role was to patrol the city at night, equipped with boots, axes and grappling hooks (*Dig.* 1.15.3), and where they suspected that a fire had broken out, they would force entry into the building in order to extinguish the flames (Robinson 1992, 106–10; Sablayrolles 1996, 354–80). Petronius's *Satyricon* (78) contains a scene in which a mock funeral at a banquet hosted by the wealthy freedman Trimalchio is interrupted by the arrival of the *vigiles* carrying axes and water, alerted by a loud blast on the trumpet, which they interpret as an emergency signal. The seven cohorts of *vigiles* reflected the Augustan division of the city, each cohort having responsibility for two *regiones*: barracks and watch-stations were distributed across Rome (Rainbird 1986; Sablayrolles 1996, 249–89). A few examples of these fire-stations have been explored by archaeologists, notably on the Caelian hill and in the Trastevere district, but the best understood barracks of the *vigiles* is at Ostia. A detachment of firefighters was stationed here in order to safeguard the crucial corn supply for the capital, much of which was stored in warehouses in the port city. Here, excavations have revealed an early second century CE structure providing residential accommodation for the firefighters themselves, space to store equipment, and a courtyard where the *vigiles* could assemble and keep safe any materials rescued from fires (Rainbird 1986, 165–7; Sablayrolles 1996, 289–313).

Measures were also taken to reduce the risk of fire breaking out and taking hold in the first place: Augustus imposed limits on the height of buildings (Strabo 5.3.7), and those occupying dwellings above ground level were obliged to store supplies of water in their property. Those found to have been careless with fire in their homes might be punished by the *vigiles* with a beating (*Dig.* 1.15. 3).

Despite these efforts, serious fires continued to break out quite regularly (Sablayrolles 1996, 771–802). When this happened, the emperors (and even members of their families) were keen to be seen to be involved in fighting them. Tiberius rebuked his mother Livia for overzealously involving herself in efforts to put out a fire near the Temple of Vesta (Suet. *Tib.* 50). In such circumstances, the urban populace could be called on to assist the *vigiles*. When a fire was raging in the Campus Martius during the reign of Claudius, the emperor offered cash to the urban plebs for their assistance, through the *vici*; in 191 CE fire spread to the Palace, and Commodus himself urged on the soldiers and civilians who were together involved in carrying water (Suet. *Claud.* 18; Cass. Dio 73.24). Emperors would seek to help in the aftermath of

a fire, too: even Tacitus, no admirer of Nero, concedes that following the fire of 64 CE, the emperor made practical efforts to house and support those made homeless by the fire (*Ann.* 15.39). The support of the gods would be sought as well: a series of votive altars was set up across the city by Domitian at which annual rites would be celebrated, as a belated initiative to protect Rome from a repetition of the Neronian disaster (*CIL* 6. 826 = 30837b = Dessau, *ILS* 4914, with Rodríguez Almeida 1993).

Law and Order

Ancient Rome was a violent place (see Aldrete, [Chapter 17](#) in this volume). Numerous anecdotes in the ancient literature highlight the everyday threat of physical assault for those living in the city, and the outbreaks of street fighting which characterized the final decades of the Republic. One dramatic illustration of this can be found in the first of Varro's books *On Agriculture* (written in the mid-30s BCE), which takes the form of a dialogue between friends at the Temple of Tellus in the Carinae district of Rome, where the participants are waiting for the *aedituus* (sacristan), who has been called away to meet with one of the aediles. The lengthy debate is brought to an end by the arrival of the distraught freedman of the *aedituus*, who announces that his patron has been stabbed by an unknown person in the street. "We went our different ways, lamenting the misfortunes of human life rather than being surprised that this had happened in Rome" (Varro *Rust.* 1.69.3), Varro concludes. A century later, we are told that one of the potential hazards of journeying through Rome at night was being assaulted by the emperor Nero, who was in the habit of roaming the city's alleyways, brothels, and cookshops dressed as a slave, stealing goods from shops and attacking passers-by (Tac. *Ann.* 13.25; Suet. *Nero* 26).

Juvenal, writing early in the second century CE, comments that a wealthy man, escorted by an entourage of torchbearers, was less likely to be attacked in this way than the more humble individual making his way home on his own (Juv. 3.278–89) and in general, the citizen's main recourse against violence was self-defense. A Roman was allowed by a law in the Twelve Tables of the fifth century BCE to kill a thief who attacked him at night or during the daytime, if he was armed with a weapon (I. 17–18). More generally, the right to self-help was seen as fundamental to Roman life. It was expected that a citizen would seek to assert his rights personally, using the physical assistance of his slaves and clients if available (Nippel 1995, 35–9; Lintott 1999b, 22–34). Under the Republic, the state did however provide some limited measures against low-level crime and disorder in the form of the patrols organized by the *tresviri capitales* (or *tresviri nocturni*), though these (as we have seen) were primarily intended to detect fires. Another major area of responsibility

for the *tresviri capitales* was supervising the execution of the condemned in the prison (*carcer*) in the Forum, and several references in Plautus demonstrate that they and their men were feared in particular by slaves, whom they might apprehend and subject to summary punishments (*Amph.* 155; *Aul.* 416–17); these were inflicted at the Maenian Column, which was located close to the prison ([Asc.] on Cic. *Div. Caec.* 50). The *tresviri* cannot be seen as constituting a police force in the modern sense, though, and a concern for order in the city was only one element in the numerous responsibilities of the aediles (Robinson 1992, 174–80; Nippel 1995, 16–19; 22–6; Lintott 1999b, 92–106).

When major disorder broke out at Rome, going beyond the capabilities of the limited forces available to the *tresviri* and the aediles, special measures were needed. A personal intervention by the consul would provide greater authority than the involvement of the junior magistrates alone, but the fact that the Roman army could not legally be deployed within the sacred boundary of the city, the *pomerium*, meant that soldiers could not be used to suppress disturbances, except in the most dire of situations (Nippel 1995). Instead, the authorities sought to mobilize the citizen population against the threat in question. In 186 BCE, volunteers were apparently deployed against the worshippers of Bacchus (Nippel 1995, 27–8), while literary accounts of the suppression of Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus and their supporters, in 133 and 121 BCE respectively, illustrate how forces loyal to the state might be deployed in the face of what was seen by traditionalists as “tribunician agitation” (Nippel 1995, 57–60). Plutarch records how in 133 BCE Scipio Nasica, the Pontifex Maximus, led senators “and those accompanying them” in an assault on Tiberius Gracchus’s men on the Capitol (Plut. *Ti. Gracch.* 19); the same author reports that in 121, following the passing of the “Senatus Consultum Ultimum,” L. Opimius instructed the Senators to arm themselves, and each of the Equites to bring two armed servants, in order to mount an attack on Gaius Gracchus and his supporters, who had occupied the Aventine hill. The attacking force also included a contingent of Cretan archers, who may have been chosen for this purpose as they were non-citizen soldiers, and with the justification that the Aventine lay outside the *pomerium* (Plut. *C. Gracch.* 14–16). Similarly, during the events surrounding the Catilinarian conspiracy of 63 BCE, Cicero was accompanied by a bodyguard formed of “friends and clients” (Sall. *Cat.* 26.4). However, the increasing disunity within the Roman aristocracy, and the decline in deference on the part of the urban population, made it harder for the elite to organize a collective response to episodes of violence in the city in the first century BCE: indeed, the interests of leading members of the ruling classes themselves often lay, directly or indirectly, behind the fighting which broke out at political gatherings (Nippel 1995, 78). As a result, violence became a central feature of political life in Rome during the sixties and (especially) the fifties BCE: one leading figure was P. Clodius Pulcher, whose supporters fought with those of T. Annius

Milo in the city's streets and public spaces (Tatum 1999, 176–213). When Clodius was killed in a pitched battle between his entourage and that of Milo on the Appian Way in 52 BCE, his supporters cremated his body in the Forum and burnt down the Senate House in the process. Pompey was made sole consul, and troops were deployed in the city to restore order and to allow Milo's trial for the murder of Clodius to take place uninterrupted; some protesters were killed as the soldiers drove them out of the Forum (Cass. Dio. 40.49–53).

Augustus's approach to the problem of violence in the city (which persisted under the triumvirs, and was not entirely resolved even in his own Principate) was on the one hand to seek to resolve some of the structural social and political problems which lay behind it: the *vici* which had provided a substantial element in Clodius's support, were reconstituted with an Augustan focus, as we have seen. At the same time, Augustus created a series of new military units which had the specific responsibility of maintaining order in the city. The most substantial of these was the Praetorian Guard (see also Coulston, Chapter 8 in this volume). Roman military commanders on campaign had traditionally had a unit encamped close to the *praetorium* (the headquarters of the camp) to provide close support, and Augustus, from 27 BCE a proconsul in charge of a substantial province, was in an analogous position (Keppie 1996, 119). The emperors had a contingent of personal bodyguards too: this role was under the Julio-Claudian emperors entrusted to a force of Germans, whose loyalty was to the emperor alone, but from the second century CE, personal protection was provided by a cavalry unit known as the *Equites Singulares* (Coulston 2000, 78). As well as providing security for the imperial residences, themselves also known as *praetoria* (Keppie 1996, 122), and for the emperor while on the move, the Praetorian cohorts provided a more general military presence in the city, and a means of suppressing serious disturbances, either by the threat of force or through direct intervention (Campbell 1984, 109–14; Coulston 2000, 86–8). Originally the soldiers were scattered across the city, and in other locations in Italy (Suet. *Aug.* 49.1) but from 23 CE they were based in a newly constructed fortress (the *Castra Praetoria*) on the Viminal (Tac. *Ann.* 4.2; Coulston 2000, 82–4). Perhaps significantly, given the Republican tradition that troops were not to be stationed within the city, this lay beyond the line of the “Servian” Walls.

Three Urban cohorts, also established under Augustus, were (until the Severan period) based alongside the nine Praetorian cohorts in their camp on the Viminal. Like the Praetorians, the men of the Urban cohorts had a privileged status by comparison with those who served in the legions stationed on the frontiers: recruited primarily from Italy, they had a shorter term of service and received better pay. While their role was evidently to maintain order within the city, we have little information about how precisely they were deployed: the literary texts tend to focus more on their commander, the Urban Prefect,

whose duties included “keeping the peace among the population and maintaining order at the public spectacles” (*Dig.* 1.12.12). Tacitus observes that he “controlled slaves and that element of the citizens troublesome because of its audacity, unless intimidated by force” (*Ann.* 6. 11). The Urban Prefect, a senator, had overall authority in relation to criminal matters within a hundred-mile radius of Rome, but the *praefectus vigilum*, despite the fact that his men were primarily concerned with the detection and suppression of fires, also had a particular role in dealing with the perpetrators of low-level criminality – arsonists, burglars, thieves, robbers, and receivers of stolen goods (*Dig.* 1.15.3.1).

The Aediles and the Day-to-Day Administration of the City

Under the Principate, we find the aediles predominantly concerned with the city’s day-to-day administration. In particular they were responsible for the oversight of markets, and keeping the city’s streets in good repair and clear from rubbish, but they also supervised a series of aspects of urban life which caused particular anxiety to the Roman elite, from a moral as well as a practical perspective.

The aediles’ involvement with the city’s markets must presumably originate in their traditional responsibility for maintaining an adequate food supply for Rome’s population, but we also find them attested dealing with disputes relating to weights and measures, and checking up on the sale of substandard merchandise; they might destroy poor-quality or overpriced food (Plaut. *Rud.* 373; *Capt.* 813–22 with Robinson 1992, 112, 132–3; Frayn 1993, 123–5). Eventually, however, we find the Urban Prefect taking control of the meat trade, and the pig market in particular (*Dig.* 1.12.1.11).

The *Tabula Heracleensis* lays down procedures for the maintenance of the fabric of Rome’s streets by the owners of abutting properties, under the oversight of the aediles (see above) and cleaning the streets was also traditionally one of their chief responsibilities, undertaken with the assistance of junior colleagues known as *quattuorviri viis in urbe purgandis* (Robinson 1992, 69–73). We hear that the future emperor Vespasian, then serving as an aedile, had mud poured onto his toga on the instructions of Caligula, who felt the streets were insufficiently clean (Suet. *Vesp.* 5.3; Cass. Dio. 59.12.3). Carts were used to remove refuse from the city: in 48 CE Messallina unsuccessfully attempted to escape the vengeance of her husband, the emperor Claudius, by hiding in one (Tac. *Ann.* 11.32), and such vehicles were exempt from restrictions on wheeled traffic in the city during daylight. A

particular concern of the authorities was to ensure that the streets were free of corpses, both animal and human (*Dig.* 43.10.1.5, with Bodel 2000, 128–35): another anecdote, again relating to Vespasian, recounts how a dog deposited a human hand that it had found at a crossroads under the table where the future emperor was eating (Suet. *Vesp.* 5.4). Inscribed stones of Republican date found on the Esquiline hill prohibited the dumping of excrement and corpses, suggesting that this was a serious problem in this district of the city (*CIL* I² 591 = Dessau, *ILS* 6082; I² 838, 839, 2981 = Dessau, *ILS* 8208 with Bodel 1994, 32–8; Graham 2006, 68–9).

Just as the aediles were concerned to rid Rome of filth in a literal sense, so they were expected to be responsible for the metaphorical cleansing of the city (Wallace-Hadrill 1995, 50–51). They had oversight of those aspects of city life which were considered to pose a particular threat to morality. Seneca observes that “pleasure is to be found... lurking around the baths and steam-baths, and the places that fear the aediles” (*Dial.* 7.7.3), and elsewhere tells us that the aediles of the Republic were accustomed to inspect the baths to ensure that they were clean and not overheated (*Ep.* 86.10). Bars and *popinae* (cook-shops) were another focus of their attention. Emperors repeatedly imposed restrictions on the type of foodstuffs which could be sold here, regulations which were monitored by the aediles: despite being a regular visitor to such establishments himself, Nero, for example, allowed no cooked food to be served there apart from vegetables and pulses (Suet. *Nero* 16; Cass. Dio 62.14). In the 370s CE, we find similar restrictions being imposed by the Urban Prefect, who by then had apparently taken over responsibility in this area too (Amm. Marc. 28.4.4). Evidently, bars and cook-shops, which represented the main focus of social life for those below the elite, were seen as a potential source of subversion and disorder (Purcell 1994, 665–6; Kleberg 1957, 101–3): a “counter-culture” as Toner aptly puts it (2009, 109). Bars, cook-shops, and baths were also thought of, with some justification, as characteristic venues for two other types of antisocial activity with which the aediles were concerned: prostitution (Robinson 1992, 137–9; McGinn 2004, 148–57) and gambling, which was an important element in the lifestyle of the poor (Purcell 2004, Toner 2009, 30–31). Tacitus suggests that the aediles maintained a list of prostitutes in the city (*Ann.* 2.85) – though it is difficult to see how such a list might have been compiled – while one of Martial’s epigrams memorably portrays a gambler dragged out of a cook-shop by an aedile (Mart. 5.84). Perhaps the aediles’ association with traditional Republican morality made it particularly appropriate for them to deal with issues of this kind.

Conclusion

It was essential for the emperors to maintain good order in the city of Rome and to keep the urban population under control. Popular disturbances could potentially prove a serious threat to their political authority, and Rome was, after all, where they lived: the imperial palace was at the center of the city, and as liable to the risks of fire (for example) as any other building. Emperors also needed to ensure that those given the responsibility of administering the city displayed loyalty to them alone: the Egnatius Rufus episode had demonstrated how risky it was to let rivals for the affections of the urban populace to emerge. Hence the concentration of powers in the hands of curators and prefects appointed directly by the emperor, who, rather than being replaced annually, might occupy their role for long periods, such as L. Calpurnius Piso, who according to Tacitus served as Urban Prefect for twenty years (*Ann.* 6. 11). Patronage was still an important element in the administration of the city, but it was now the emperors, rather than senatorial magistrates, who were in a position to exercise it, and the supporters informally gathered by Republican magistrates to enforce their authority gave way to officially sanctioned contingents of soldiers or slaves (Purcell 1986, 569–71). Ideology played an important part in this process, too. Just as the Republican magistrates could gain prestige from holding fine games or successfully resolving food shortages, so the emperor wanted to be seen as the champion and supporter of the urban plebs, whether initiating reforms to resolve practical difficulties or intervening personally at a time of crisis. As the *Digest* puts it in relation to the establishment of the *vigiles*, “he [Augustus] believed that it was appropriate that no-one but Caesar should watch over the security of the *res publica*.” (*Dig.* 1.15.3).

Guide to Further Reading

The fundamental study of the administration of the city of Rome is Robinson (1992): the author’s expertise in Roman law and knowledge of local government in Scotland combine to provide a thorough overview of the topic. Purcell (1986) provides a brief but thought-provoking analysis of the characteristic features of Roman administrative practice, setting the administration of Rome in the broader context of the structures of Roman society, and the government of the empire more generally. On the different aspects of administration discussed in this chapter, see in particular (on fires) Rainbird (1986) and Sablayrolles (1996); (on law and order) Nippel (1995) and Lintott (1999b); (on markets) Frayn 1993; (on the disposal of rubbish and the corpses of the destitute) Scobie (1986), Bodel (1994 and 2000) and Graham (2006); (on “the places that fear the aediles”) Wallace-Hadrill (1995) and Toner (2009). The works of Garnsey (1988) and Bruun (1991), though dealing with aspects of administration not discussed in detail in this chapter,

have implications beyond the topics they discuss (the food supply and the aqueducts of Rome respectively). Lintott (1999a) provides an accessible account of the institutions of Republican Rome; Nicolet (1991) and Lott (2004) cast light on the implications for the city of Caesar's and Augustus's administrative reforms, as does Wallace-Hadrill (2008) who emphasises the remarkable quantity of information on the city and its inhabitants in the hands of the Roman authorities.

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PART V

LIVING IN ROME

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

i The Development and Role of the Roman Aristocratic *Domus*

Hannah Platts

Introduction

The Regionary Catalogues of the fourth century CE divide Rome's domestic realm into two types of residence: the *insula* (considered by DeLaine in this volume, [Chapter 14ii](#)), of which the Catalogues record 44,300, and the *domus*, of which there were only 1,790. Ancient Romans typically employed the word *domus* to refer to a living unit, namely the citizen family and its household of slaves, only by extension was it applied to the building where they lived. The normal term for a house was probably *aedes* (e.g. Sal. *Jug.* 12. 5; Cic. *Off.* 1.138; Petr. *Sat.* 53). It is modern scholarship, influenced by the writings of Vitruvius (e.g. Vit. *De Arch.* 6. 1.2, 6.7.3–4), which has chosen the term *domus* to denote a town house, ranging from the relatively modest houses at Pompeii to the mansions and palaces of Rome's aristocracy and imperial family. The written evidence and archaeological remains of ancient Roman houses pose significant difficulties, which are explained in the first two sections of this chapter. It then considers the concepts of “public” and “private” in the analysis of structure and function in the aristocratic urban dwelling in Rome.

The Roman Aristocratic *Domus* in Ancient Text

Houses frequently provide the setting for the events and individuals of Rome's written history, and they form a significant element of the moralizing discourses from authors such as Cicero, Vitruvius, Pliny the Elder, and Plutarch, who praise the austerity or condemn the lavishness of the dwellings of contemporaries or predecessors. Yet the histories of the monarchic and early Republican periods were written centuries later, and few sources offer any description beyond some indication of location. For instance, can we really believe Plutarch and Dionysius of Halicarnassus, writing in the early Principate, when they emphasize that the Palatine Hill played an important

role in Rome's early settlement? Dionysius Halicarnassus (1.79.1) states that it was in a shepherd's hut on the Palatine Hill that Romulus and Remus spent their formative years, whilst Plutarch (*Rom.* 20.4) records that Romulus was the only king to live on the Palatine Hill in a house situated near the *Scalae Caci*.

By the mid Republic, literary references cite numerous examples of *domus* residences of Rome's political elite in and around the Forum Romanum. According to Livy (44.16.10, 28.38.8) during the late third century BCE Publius Cornelius Scipio Africanus, famous for victory at Zama over Hannibal, lived on the Forum's south side. Implicit in Livy's account is the importance of this central location since this enabled voters to catch a glimpse of the celebrated general, which helped his election to the consulship of 205 BCE.

The advantages of living close to the Forum Romanum for securing popular support continued to be recognized throughout the late Republic, but in the second century BCE the elite gradually relinquished their houses in the Forum, converting them into basilicas and other public buildings, and moved to higher ground on the adjacent hills. The valley bottoms were left to the lower echelons of Roman society. In 123 BCE the reformer Gaius Sempronius Gracchus moved from a house on the Palatine to one in the vicinity of the Forum precisely because "he thought [it] more democratic, since most of the poor and lowly had come to live there" (Plut. *C. Gracch.* 12). Prior to his election in 63 BCE as Pontifex Maximus (when he moved to the *domus Publica* the official residence attached to the post, at the east end of the Forum), Julius Caesar's house was in the Subura behind the Forum on the higher ground in the valley between the Capitoline and Quirinal hills (Suet. *Iul.* 46.1). The house of his fellow triumvir Pompey overlooked the Forum from the adjacent Carinae (the western end of the Oppian hill) (Suet. *Gram. et rhet.* 15.1; Vell. Pat. 2.77; Cic. *Har. resp.* 49). Octavian's first house (Suet. *Aug.* 72) was also situated near the Forum above the Stairs of the Ringmakers (location unknown but presumably on a hillside).

Whilst the Roman Forum presented particular benefits to some in terms of proximity to the people, the Palatine's enduring presence in Rome's legendary past ensured that it remained highly desirable to many of Rome's aristocrats. Besides the tale of Romulus and Remus, from Cicero (*Dom.* 102, 114) we hear that Marcus Fulvius Flaccus (cos. 125 BCE) owned a residence on the north-west side of the Palatine. Flaccus was killed in 121 BCE when he led a failed revolt on the Aventine hill which had sought the re-election of Gaius Sempronius Gracchus to the tribunate. After his death, his house was destroyed (cf. Val. Max. 6.3.1c).

A Palatine residence became increasingly attractive during the last century of the Republic, with political friends and rivals living in close proximity to each other. The catalogue of important late Republican residents includes military

men such as Quintus Lutatius Catulus, co-consul with Marius (102 BCE) and a fellow soldier (Plut. *Mar.* 14, 15, 23–27; Plin. *HN* 17.1) whose house was one of the most opulent of the time (Plin. *HN* 17.1.2). Catulus erected a portico next to his house on the site of M. Fulvius Flaccus's dwelling. Eminent lawyers also resided here, including Quintus Hortensius Hortalus whose residence was on the summit and, from 62 BCE, Marcus Tullius Cicero who purchased a house on the north corner for 3.5 million sesterces from M. Crassus (Cic. *Fam.* 5.6.2). The property had previously belonged to M. Livius Drusus (tribune 91 BCE) (Nisbet 1939; cf. Allen 1939–40 a and b). Cicero's brother Quintus took an adjacent property in 59 BCE (Cic. *Att.* 2.4.7). Others inherited Palatine residences, for example Clodius, Cicero's neighbor (Cic. *Att.* 1.16.10), who later rented it to M. Caelius Rufus (Cic. *Caecin.* 7). L. Licinius Crassus (cos. 95 BCE) lived in a house probably inherited from his father: he was renowned as being the first to install columns of Greek (Hymettan) marble in the atrium, having originally imported them for the stage of a temporary theatre used in games he had given as aedile in 105–103 BCE (Plin. *HN* 17.1, 36.3). Similarly opulent was the Palatine house of M. Aemilius Scaurus with four columns of Lucullan marble in its atrium, relocated from the temporary theatre built during his aedileship of 58 BCE (Plin. *HN* 17.5–6, 36.6). Some individuals risked bankruptcy to ensure a suitable base on the Palatine. Clodius, for example, paid 14.8 million *sestercii* (Plin. *HN* 36.103) and Cicero borrowed 2 million from P. Sulla (Gell. 12.12). Cicero's house was located close to the residence of his friend Q. Caecilius Metellus (cos. 60 BCE) but was also very near that of his arch rival Clodius Pulcher.

Octavian relocated, sometime before 36 BCE, to the Palatine house of the orator Hortensius described as “modest” and “lacking marble decoration or fine pavements” (Suet. *Aug.* 72.1; Vell. Pat. 2.81.3 cf. Wiseman 2009). To this house he added the neighboring house of Q. Lutatius Catulus (Suet. *Gram. et rhet.* 17), and other neighboring properties were purchased with the intention of expansion. When one of them was struck by lightning in 36 BCE, this was taken as a sign from Apollo that a temple be built there. As a consequence, Octavian relinquished ownership of the property to the state and offered to build a temple to Apollo here at his own expense (Cass. Dio 49.15.5).

The future emperor Augustus's choice of dwelling – alongside other members of the senatorial aristocracy – was important as it served to highlight his status as *primus inter pares* rather than anything more autocratic. Indeed Augustus constantly emphasized restoration of Rome's Republic rather than a return to kingship in a culture that traditionally loathed monarchy. When his house burnt down in 3 CE, Augustus rebuilt it and made it public property (Suet. *Aug.* 57.2; Cass. Dio 55.12.4–5). Thereafter it was known as the House of Augustus (*domus Augusti* / *Augustana*) and remained at the heart of the Palatine imperial palace. Initially extended by Tiberius, all successive

emperors added further sections so that by Late Antiquity the palace came to occupy the entire Palatine summit.

The dominance of the Palatine by the emperors meant that many of Rome's elite moved elsewhere in the city, though until the Great Fire of 64 CE areas surrounding the Forum remained important, as did the Via Sacra leading from the Forum to the Palatine, where some Republican houses continued to be inhabited in imperial times. Thus Cicero's residence was later occupied by Lucius Marcius Censorinus and then Statilius Sisenna (Vell. Pat. 2.14.3) and Scaurus's house was acquired by Caecilius Caecina Largus (Plin. *HN* 17.5). The Great Fire destroyed much of this housing (Suet. *Nero*, 39 cf. Tac. *Ann.* 15. 45) including Nero's new palace on the Palatine. The replacement palace included the Domus Aurea, which linked the Palatine palace to the Gardens of Maecenas on the Esquiline and removed much of the area's remaining aristocratic housing. When the Domus Aurea was demolished by Nero's successors, the land was employed for public monuments like the Colosseum, not private residences.

By the High Empire, elite houses were increasingly located away from the city's center. The Aventine (in the Republic a plebeian housing area) as well as the Caelian, Esquiline and Quirinal were popular. Pliny the Younger lived on the Esquiline in a house that had belonged to Albinovanus Pedo, the poet and friend of Ovid (Mart. 10.19.5–10; Plin. *Ep.* 3.21.5) whilst nearby lived the suffect consul of 101 CE, Lucius Arruntius Stella (Mart. 12.2.9–12).

The imperial family's domination of the Palatine was not the only factor in this shift. Under the Principate, senators were required to maintain a house in or near Rome but the changing political system, where imperial favor was more important for office than election by the *populus*, meant that living in the center of Rome became less vital. Away from the center of Rome, space was less at a premium, and as such, residences could become larger in size if located at a distance from the heart of the city (Platts 2011, 246–7). It is also likely that the hillsides and hilltops were preferable, for example in terms of health, to the valleys between them (Aldrete 2004, 11).

The division of the Roman Empire during the third century CE meant that in practical terms (if not symbolically) the importance of the city of Rome diminished, as the western imperial court moved away from Rome (first to Milan in 286 CE under Diocletian, then Ravenna in 402 CE under Honorius). We should, however, avoid being too simplistic about the consequences of this in terms of aristocratic housing in the city itself. Rome did, after all, remain the seat of the Roman senate and whilst the senate had ceased to wield significant authority, members were still required to maintain a residence within the city, even if the rest of the family resided elsewhere. Most of these obligatory dwellings, however, continued the trend of High Empire by being located on the hills away from the center of Rome. The Urban Prefect of c. 365 CE Lampadius, for example, resided on the Quirinal Hill near the Baths

of Constantine (Amm. Mar. 27.3.8).

Despite the changing political role of Rome the aristocratic *domus* retained, for many owners, a vital role in parading wealth at the daily meeting of clients (e.g. Amm. Marc. 28.4.12), as well as fulfilling a continued desire for luxurious display (e.g. SHA *Balbinus* 16.1; *Tyr. Trig.* 33.6; Cassiod. *Var.* 3.10). In fact, aristocratic housing within late antique Rome was by no means falling into complete decline. In the late third and early fourth centuries CE, Diocletian tried to encourage Rome's landed elite to return to the city (Claridge 2010, 28), while in the second half of the fourth century (c. 364 CE) Ammianus Marcellinus (27.3.4) refers to the orator Symmachus's beautiful house across the Tiber. Symmachus's letters reveal that as well as five *villae* in Rome's *suburbium* he owned at least three houses in the city itself (*Ep.* 3.12, 3.14, 3.88, 7.18; cf. Hillner 2003). In the early fifth century Olympiodorus emphasized the impressive size of the urban residences of Rome's senators, "One house is a town; the city hides ten thousand towns" (Olympiodorus, *fr.* 41.1) and a text of Theodoric highlights the request from Albinus (cos. 493 CE) to extend his residence above the *porticus Absidata* located at the end of the Forum Transitorium (Cassiod. *Var.* 4.30). This particular residence was located in the center of the city, in the bottom of the valley. As such it presents an important example of late Roman senators displaying their individual power by taking over public space in the heart of Rome, for whilst many aristocratic residences were situated on the hills surrounding Rome, this is not true of all late antique elite dwellings in and around the city. These numerous literary examples serve to highlight continued elite desire for opulent display in urban Roman dwellings well into late antiquity.

The Roman Aristocratic *Domus* in Archaeology

The constant habitation of Rome has ensured that, unlike some of the great public monuments, most of its ancient domestic buildings have vanished, long since replaced by generations of successors. In the absence of substantial surviving remains in Rome scholars have looked instead to the cities destroyed by Vesuvius in 79 CE, especially Pompeii and Herculaneum, where housing is preserved in abundance. There are, however, distinct issues with employing even the largest houses from such medium-sized urban settlements as surrogates for those in the capital. One particularly striking example of the issues faced will suffice: our ancient sources regularly refer to *vestibula*, or large waiting areas, located in the front of aristocratic houses in Rome where numerous people would gather to see the owner of the residence (on *vestibula*

being located in front of houses see, Gell. 16.5; Macrob. *Sat.* 6.8.14–23; App. *B. Civ.* 3.14; Varro *Ling.* 7.81; Cic. *Caecin.* 35, 84, 89; Philo, *On the Virtues* 89. On *vestibula* being places for waiting see App. *B. Civ.* 3.14; Cic. *Att* 4.3.5, *De Or.* 1.200; Sen. *Ep.* 84.12. On the large size of *vestibula* filled with crowds of visitors see Gell. 16.5.9–10; Cic. *De Or.* 1.200; Sen. *Cons. Ad Marc.* 10, *Ep.* 84.12, *Ben.* 6.34.4–5; Stat. *Silv.* 4.4.39–42). Their architectural form is debatable (Dickmann 1999, 51 n. 20; Leach 1993), but it is generally understood that they were unroofed, enclosed by protruding house walls on three sides, whilst the fourth side remained open to the street (Wiseman 1982, 28). One of the reasons why Octavian bought up adjoining properties to Hortensius's house on the Palatine in 36 BCE (see above) was to create more space, probably to enlarge its *vestibulum*. Pompeii presents only one possible example of a *vestibulum* in the House of Octavius Quartio (Reg. II.2.2), but at 5 square meters in extent it hardly competes with those mentioned in the sources regarding Rome.

From postholes and floors of three huts dating from the eighth to seventh century BCE, discovered on the Palatine in 1948 (Boethius 1978, 23 and figs 10–11; Claridge 2010, 131–2, figs 51–2; cf. Cornell 1995, 53–7), and the appearance of contemporary burial urns in the shape of huts, Rome's earliest houses consisted of a single large rectangular room measuring on average 5 × 3 meters with rounded corners and a pitched thatched roof. Their walls were timber-framed infilled with wattle and daub, of which no trace remains. By the end of the sixth century BCE we see a shift from single-roomed wooden-framed huts (called *tugurium* or *casa*) to larger, multiroomed structures on more durable stone foundations (of the local tuff) with walls of mudbrick. Excavations on the north-east slope of the Palatine in the 1980s (Carandini 1986, 263–71) enabled the ground plans of two large houses to be reconstructed, measuring 20 × 40 meters (Figure 14.1) and comprising eight or nine separate rooms, organized around a central internal courtyard that was perhaps later partially roofed, similar to the atrium-courtyard of later Roman residences (Claridge 2010, 117). These houses remained largely unchanged for the next 400 years until the area was destroyed by fire. When rebuilt, the new dwellings occupied a smaller footprint but were multistorey and had basements consisting of individual cells, perhaps for slaves. One particularly well-preserved house basement near the Arch of Titus comprised thirty such cells (Carandini 1988, 359–87; Edmondson 2011, 346).

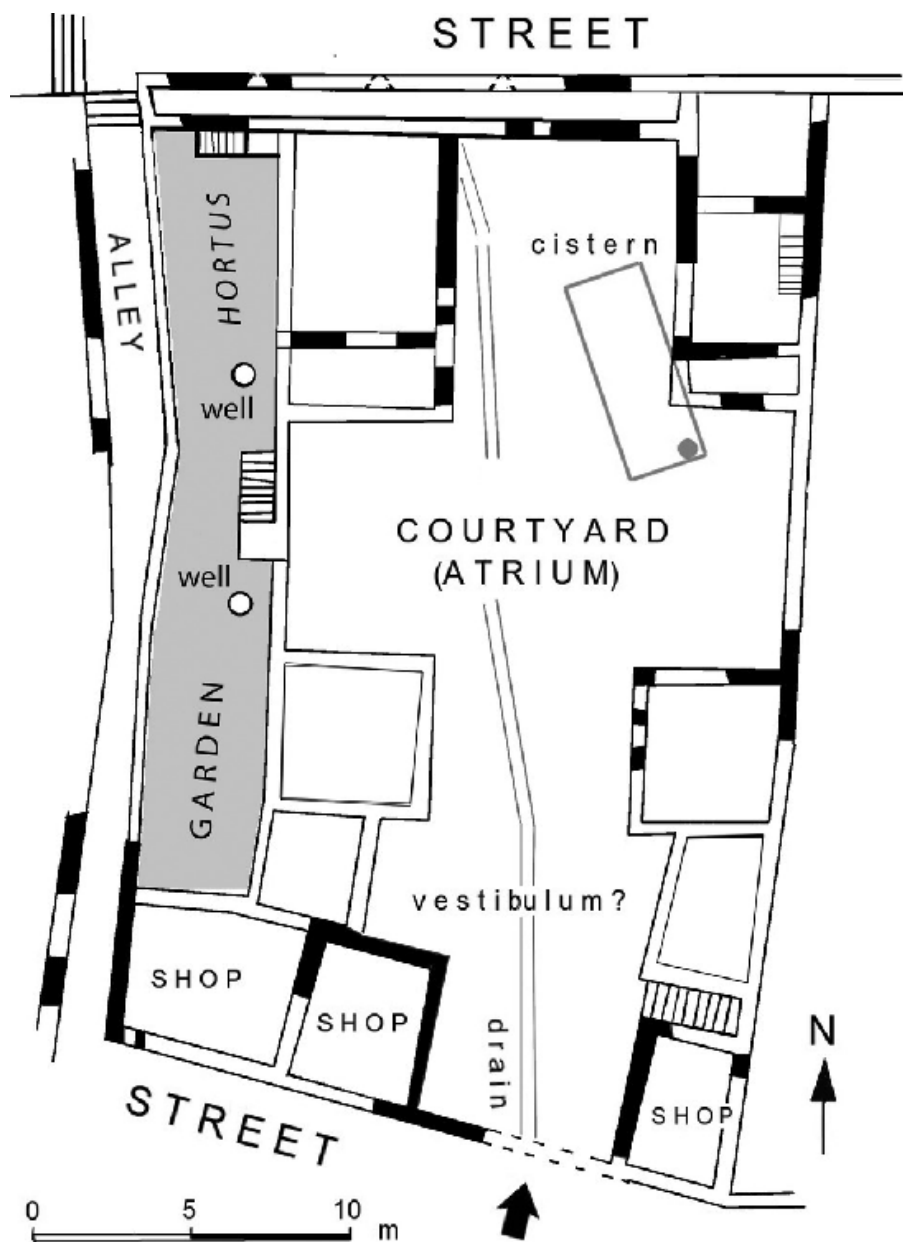


Figure 14.1 Plan (extensively reconstructed) of a large house of the sixth century BCE beside the Via Sacra, Rome.

Plan courtesy of A. Claridge (based on A. Carandini and P. Carafa. *Palatium I*, vol. 2, pl. 57). Source: Adapted from Carandini.

The multistorey nature of the rebuilt houses on the north-east slope of the Palatine is typical of the city. Another example is the House of the Griffins, built into the hillside on the Palatine summit. Dated from its wall-paintings (Rizzo 1936, 1–8; Clarke 1991, 41) to about 80 BCE, only a fraction of this

two-storey dwelling, located beneath the so-called *lararium* of Domitian's Palace, has been excavated. The upper floor, which housed its atrium, was located on the same level as the top of the Palatine Hill whilst at its lower level was situated a large dining room flanked by smaller rooms. Two houses, one small and one very large, employing a similar layout – main floor at the level of the hill top with suites of dining rooms and other smaller richly decorated rooms situated on lower stories on the side of the hill – have been excavated at its south-west corner, the larger one later occupied by the Temple of Apollo (**Figure 14.2**). These remains are traditionally referred to as the House of Livia and the House of Augustus, although such identifications are becoming increasingly doubtful (Wiseman 2009).

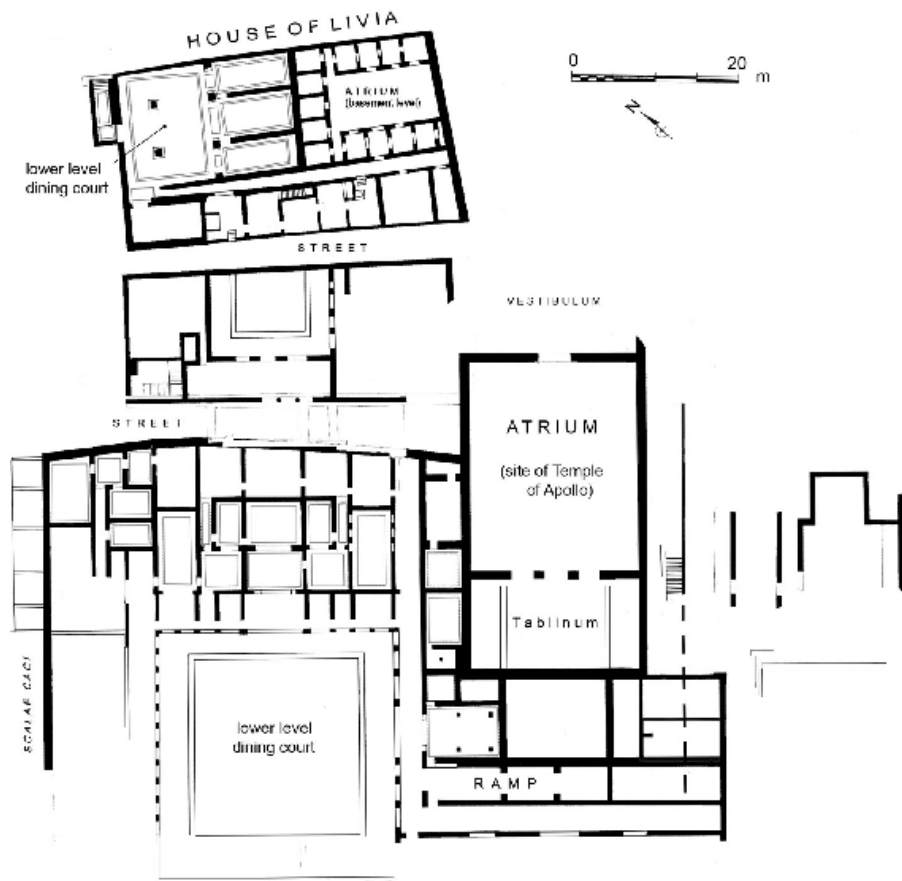


Figure 14.2 Plan of the so-called House of Livia (c. 100–80 BCE) and so-called House of Augustus (c. 60–50 BCE) on the Palatine Hill, Rome.

Plan courtesy of A. Claridge (based on M.A. Tomei, *Augusto sul Palatino. Gli scavi di Gianfilippo Carettoni. Appunti inediti* (1955–1984), loose plate. Pub. Mondadori Electa Milan). Source: Adapted from Tomei.

Aristocratic houses in Republican Rome were laid out around a front court or hall, the *cavaedium* according to Vitruvius (known to modern scholarship as

atrium) flanked on either side by a series of smaller rooms. It was here that the daily ritual of the *salutatio* occurred, where *clientes* would visit their patrons at home in return for *sportulae* (a handout often of money or food). To the rear of the atrium, usually on axis with the front door, was the *tablinum* or *tabulinum* where family records (*tabula*) were housed and where the master could undertake business transactions (e.g. Vitruvius *De Arch.* 6.3.5; Pliny *HN* 35.2). Recesses (*alae*) provided space for clients to wait to be received by the patron in the *tablinum*. Behind this were located one or more further courtyards, containing gardens, surrounded by colonnades (*peristilia*). More than 200 of the houses excavated in Pompeii have this basic “atrium–peristyle” layout with infinite variations in size and disposition (Wallace-Hadrill 1994). However, by the end of the first century CE, as some of the houses at Herculaneum demonstrate, this style of housing was being replaced by a new formula, the axial–peristyle house, the archetype of which is the *domus Augustana*, the imperial palace on the Palatine rebuilt by Domitian in the 80s CE (Figure 14.3). Here the core of the palace comprised twin axial–peristyle suites, interconnecting with each other also on the cross-axis, combining to make an opulent and spacious sequence of reception and dining areas. At the heart were two colonnaded courts containing enormous pools, which had on opposing sides two large audience-cum-dining rooms. The development of sizeable rooms such as these ensured the maintenance of the “reception” functions previously met by the atrium.

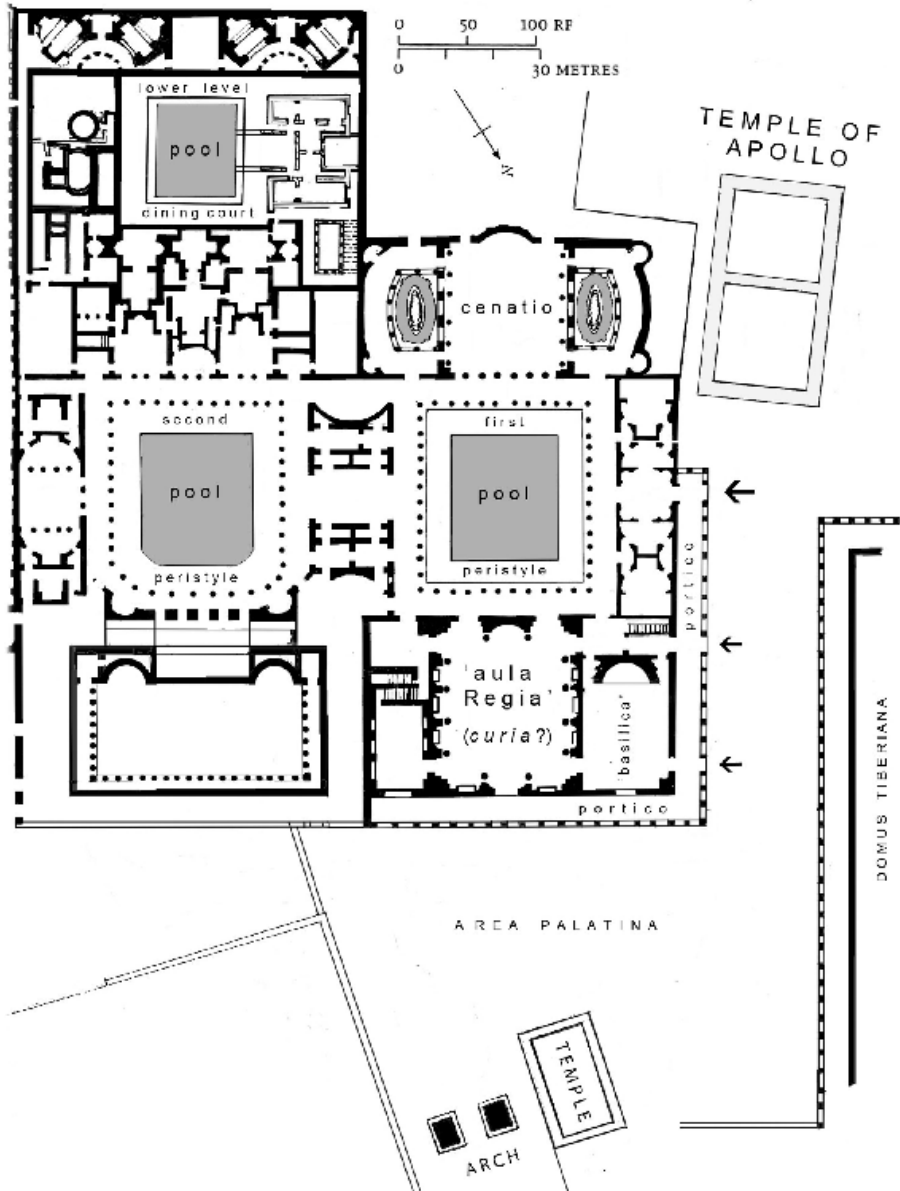


Figure 14.3 Plan of the central block of the imperial palace (*domus Augustana*) as rebuilt by Domitian 80–90 CE on the Palatine Hill, Rome.

Plan courtesy of A. Claridge.

Similar developments can be observed in the few houses of second and third century date that have been excavated elsewhere in Rome. Their plans center on a courtyard, and usually contain a large, often apsidal, room used for reception, dining and entertainment. A *domus* of the Hadrianic period, for example, found on the Viminal hill (under the Piazza dei Cinquecento), incorporated a richly decorated apsidal reception or dining hall on one side of

a central court, with a suite of three smaller rooms axially arranged on the other side (Figure 14.4). The presence of an internal staircase to an upper floor, demonstrates the construction of multistorey *domus* residences in Rome. Older atrium–peristyle type houses, however, continued to exist. Three appear on a fragment of the Severan Marble Plan of Rome (see Tucci, Chapter 1iii this volume) showing a residential quarter along the Vicus Patricius, between the Viminal and Cispan Hills (Fr. 11e; fig. 14.5).

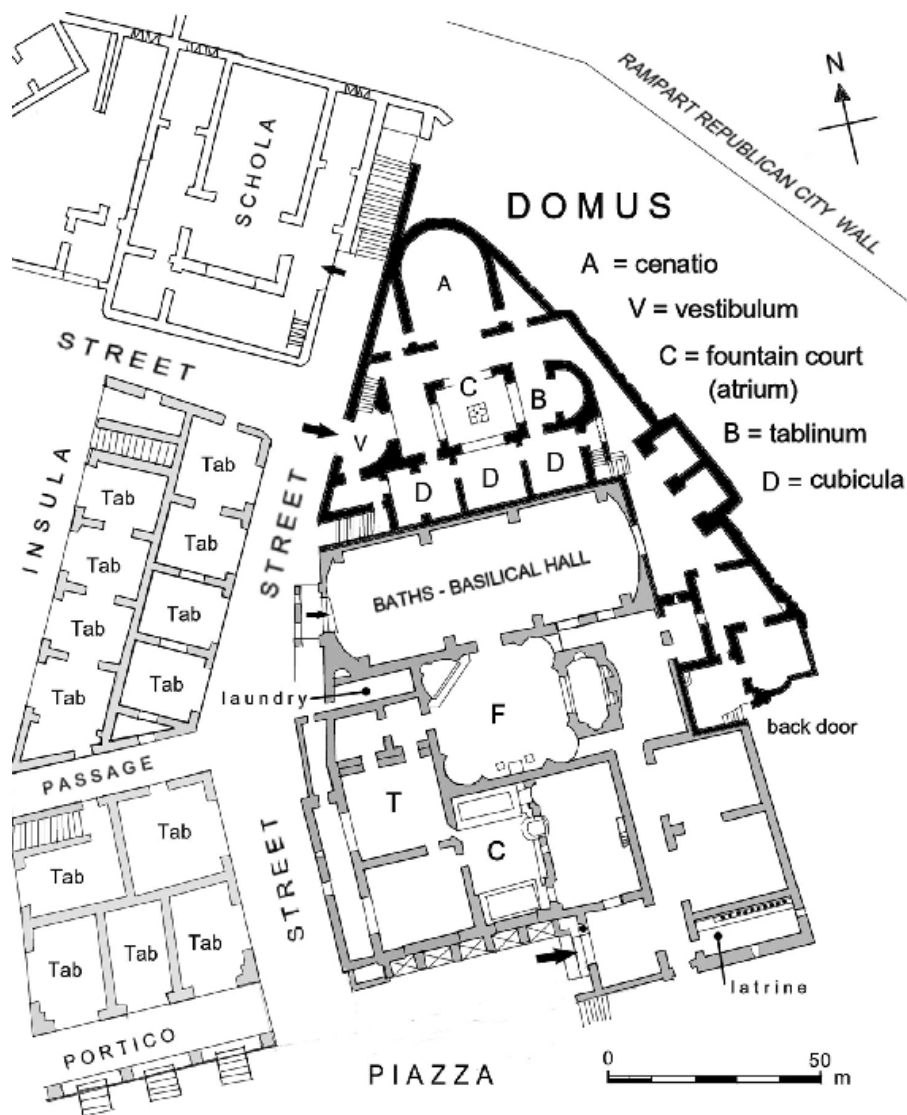


Figure 14.4 Plan of *domus* and baths from the Hadrianic period (120–140 CE) and adjacent *insulae* excavated on the Viminal Hill (under Piazza dei Cinquecento), Rome.

Plan courtesy of A. Claridge (based on R. Paris *et al.* *Antiche Stanze: Un quartiere di Roma Imperiale nella zona di Termini*, fold-out plate. Pub. G. Mondadori). Source:



Figure 14.5 Fragment 11e of the Severan Marble Plan, depicting atrium houses along the Vicus Patricius, between the Viminal and Cispan Hills.

Photograph: Digital *Forma Urbis Romae* Project, Stanford University.

Some traces have also been found of the grand aristocratic *domus* of the Later Empire. Part of a late fourth-century residence has been identified on the Oppian Hill, laid out on top of the Sette Sale (meaning “Seven Rooms”) a vast concrete cistern supplying water to the Baths of Trajan. The remains comprise a bathing suite and a series of variously shaped and richly marbled reception and dining halls (Claridge 2010, 328). Parts of another very large town house of the fifth century CE have been excavated under Palazzo Valentini, to the north of Trajan’s Column (Baldassarri 2008–9, 356). Supplementary evidence of later imperial aristocratic housing can be seen at Ostia, Rome’s port at the mouth of the Tiber, albeit on a more modest scale than in Rome itself. Some six or seven opulent houses have been excavated, at least two stories high, dating from the fourth and fifth centuries CE, mostly centered on a peristyle court, with a large reception hall, monumental fountain and their own private baths, including the House of the Fortuna Annonaria and the House of Cupid

and Psyche (Boin [2013](#)).

The Structure and Function of the *Domus*: Interpreting “Public” and “Private” Space

In recent years, scholars have become increasingly aware of the epistemological difficulties in combining material and written sources to explore antiquity (Storey [1999](#); Allison [2001](#); Hall 2015) and the problems are especially acute in the ancient domestic realm (Allison [2001](#); Platts accepted for publication a and b).

That a large town house near the city center played a vital social role for Rome’s elite is perhaps best demonstrated by the example of Cicero. As the first of his family to reach the consulship, for Cicero the purchase of his house on the Palatine in 62 BCE was the embodiment of his achievement. The timing of its acquisition, a year after Cicero’s consulship and the award of the title *Pater Patriae*, was critical as it publicly symbolized his political success. He could now reside amongst Rome’s elite “in the sight of the whole city” (Cic. *Dom.* 37.100). When he was exiled in 58 BCE, Cicero felt the associated destruction of his house keenly, as is demonstrated by his pleas to the senate for its restoration after his return to Rome in 57 BCE (Cic. *Dom.* 37. 100–38. 101). Without his Palatine home, Cicero’s reinstatement was incomplete (Cic. *Dom.* 57.146–58.147).

The visible nature of the aristocratic Roman home – and connected with this the concept of “public” and “private” space within the *domus* – has been a key factor in examining these residences. Unlike urban houses today, which are perceived as private domains where only invited guests are welcome, much of the Roman *domus* was on public show (Wallace-Hadrill [1994](#)). Its location in view of the “whole city” as Cicero put it, was important and it was not just the view of the house from other hills or Forum that was important, but also the view of the city from the house, and, in the Republic at least, the proximity of the house to the Forum, the city’s political heart (Plut. *Cic.* 8). As highlighted above, through rituals such as that of the *salutatio*, the *domus* of Rome’s elite played a key role not only in personal but also competitive display – the greater the crowds awaiting their patron outside his dwelling, the more kudos achieved.

Yet, closer consideration of the archaeological and literary evidence relating to the open nature of the aristocratic *domus* reveals a rather more complex picture. Architecturally speaking, the axial view through the Roman home from its doorway through its atrium, into the *tablinum* and finally into the

peristyle garden beyond has often been emphasized (Clarke 1991; Wallace-Hadrill 1994; Bergmann 1994), influencing our understanding of the role of the *domus* in the daily customs of Roman society (see e.g. Flower 1996, 199–200 on the importance of sightlines from the doorway and its impact on the performance of social rituals in the atrium). In practice, however, we cannot be certain that such uninterrupted and uncontrolled views were regularly achieved, or indeed desired. It must be noted that in between the house doorway and the peristyle garden could lie numerous barriers, such as closed doors, curtains and partitions. At the very least, many of the *tablina* in the houses of Pompeii and Herculaneum (e.g. the House of the Wooden Partition at Herculaneum) show evidence of wooden screens that could be drawn in order to close off the front section of the house from the back. This must have had a considerable impact upon not only sightlines within the house but also other sensory experiences within the dwelling such as haptic (i.e. touch), auditory, and olfactory responses (see Platts 2016 and accepted for publication a and b) on the possible sensory responses, beyond sight, experienced within residences). Indeed the axial layout of a dwelling and/or the action of closing off certain sections was potentially not only connected with the (lack of) visual experience of the outsider but might rather be advantageous for inhabitants in terms of light, ventilation, and temperature control. Moreover, we might also note here the decline in the standard atrium–peristyle Roman house from the first century CE onwards, as discussed above, and the likely effect this would have had on possible axial views into the heart of the dwelling.

The literary evidence also suggests a more complicated image of the “open” and “public” nature of the Roman house. The accessibility of the elite *domus* is emphasized early on in Rome’s Republic, by the story of the senate in 505 BCE granting Publicola the honor of the doors to his house opening outwards onto the street rather than inwards, as was the case with all other houses (Plut. *Publ.* 20.2; Plin. *HN* 36.112). It is possible that this alteration to the structure of Publicola’s residence paved the way for the development of the *vestibulum* within later dwellings. Later individuals continued to be commended for the “open” and “public” nature of their houses (e.g. Plut. *Cic.* 36.3 praised the lack of a doorkeeper at Cicero’s *domus*, cf. *Cic. Comm. Pet.* 13.50). Indeed, as Vitruvius’s architectural treatise outlines, the public areas of the house are those parts to which uninvited people might wander (Vitr. *De Arch.* 6.5. 1). As the reference to a doorkeeper suggests, however, access to elite houses was, to an extent, controlled. In the late first century BCE, Ovid (*Am.* 1.6) bemoans the doorkeeper who bars access to his lover. In the mid-second century CE, Fronto (*Epist. Graec.* 5) suggests the need for doorkeepers to prevent access to houses, whilst Lucian of Samosata (*Nigrinus* 22), writing possibly around 160–62 CE on the ritual of the *salutatio* in Rome, highlights again the importance of controlling access to the *domus* at certain times, “They rise in the small hours of the night, to go on their round of the city, to

have doors slammed in their faces by slaves, to swallow as best they may the compliments of ‘Dog,’ ‘Flatterer,’ and the like.”

Increasingly, such evidence suggest that we should start to investigate a more nuanced interpretation of Roman housing, including examples of the aristocratic *domus* and the complex and changeable image it presents, exploring the “public” and “private” nature of all parts of the dwelling and their varying roles at different times of day, night and season. By so doing we might begin to understand in more depth the highly intricate and multifaceted nature of the Roman aristocratic *domus* and the numerous roles it could play in constructing and presenting an owner’s image to the world beyond.

Guide to Further Reading

There is no monographic study of the development of the *domus* in the city of Rome. For a useful starting point, albeit rather outdated, see McKay [1975](#). Some 688 *domus* named in the ancient written sources are documented in *LTUR* 2, 22–217. For insights into the archaeological remains see Claridge [2010](#) and Coarelli [2007](#).

On the imperial palaces on the Palatine, Mar [2005](#) provides a general overview with phase plans of the architectural developments; Carandini [2004](#) presents important, albeit controversial, interpretations on the recent excavations; for the Romulean monuments, see Coarelli [2012](#). Detailed archaeological studies on individual residences include Krause [1985](#), [1994](#) on the *domus Tiberiana* and Cantino-Wataghin [1966](#) on the *domus Augustana*. On the aristocratic residence wrongly attributed to Livia see Carettoni [1953](#). For the adjacent residence traditionally attributed to Augustus, see Carettoni [1983](#); Wiseman [1987](#); Tomei [2000](#); Carandini and Bruno [2008](#), with reasoned objections in Wiseman [2009](#). A useful summary of the debates surrounding this residence can also be found in Hall [2014](#), 167–85.

On the *salutatio* in the Roman aristocratic house see Flower [1996](#) and for a particular focus on the *salutatio* itself see Hartnett [2011](#), 2008; Goldbeck [2010](#). How often the *salutatio* was practiced outside Rome is harder to ascertain, though benches located outside numerous houses and villas in on the Bay of Naples suggest it was known beyond the metropolis.

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ii *Insulae*

Janet DeLaine

The use of the contrasting pair of *domus* and *insula* to indicate all private residential property in Rome goes back at least to Tacitus (*Ann.* 6.45.1, 15.41.1) and Suetonius (*Nero* 38. 1), and was still current in the fourth century according to the Regionary Catalogues. It is not, however, always clear how “*insula*” should be understood. While the word *insula* literally means an island, the term is open to several interpretations in the context of urban housing, from a whole city block to a self-contained multiple-occupancy residential structure belonging to a single owner, or an individual residential unit within a larger structure; modern scholars are still divided over the most likely interpretation. Ancient usage suggests that the meaning varied depending on date and context, but that it did not always or necessarily refer to the type of multistoried apartment blocks now usually associated with the term *insula* at Rome and Ostia (see Priester 2002, 23–36 and 238–77; Storey 2004, and Cucinotta 2012, 172–3 for various interpretations and reference to earlier discussions).

The legal codes, which developed specifically in the context of the city of Rome, are particularly useful on questions of the definition of *insula* in relation to ownership and occupancy. A passage from the *Digest* (32.91.6 (6), (Papinian)) shows the potential complexity of the issue; it states that “under the term *domus* is also understood an *insula* joined to the same, if both were purchased for one price and... the rents of both were carried together on the books,” suggesting that the same structure could be thought of as a *domus* or an *insula* depending on how it was acquired and operated. One key element for distinguishing *insula* from *domus*, however, seems to be that *insula* relates to rental accommodation, and this is also the context of many of our written sources (Frier 1977). Because of the basic legal principle that whoever owned the land owned what was above it (*Dig.* 8.2.36 (Papinian); 43.17.3.7 (Labeo in Ulpian)), multistorey apartment blocks designed for multiple occupancy had to have been largely rental properties (although we have to allow for some degree of possible occupancy by owners and/or their families and dependents for parts of such buildings), and hence must have accounted for the greater proportion of *insulae* at Rome. It was also possible to own a proportion of an *insula*, however defined; Cicero (*Att.* 15.26.4) owned one-eighth of one, presumably then taking a one-eighth share of the total income from rents. Whatever their physical composition, however, *insulae* were certainly a source of income for their owners, who generally belonged to the upper socioeconomic levels of Roman society, including but by no means

exclusively senators (Frier 1980, 23–26). While there is evidence for *insulae* bringing in high returns from rents, there is also evidence from both literary sources and legal texts that risks could be high as well, due to the continuing danger of destruction by fire and/or of collapse, particularly of multistorey structures (e.g. Gell. *NA* 15.1.1–3; Sen. *Controv.* 2.11; Sen. *QNat.* 6.32.5; Juv. 3.7–8, 193–6).

It is not surprising that multistorey structures were particularly common in Rome, as the demands for housing the enormous population of Rome, traditionally estimated at about 800,000–1 million in the early imperial period (see Lo Cascio 2001 for a good discussion; also Chapter 6 in this volume), must have encouraged the construction of ever higher structures to provide sufficient space. A passage from Livy (21.62.3) dating to 219–218 BCE, recording how a cow found its way up to the third storey of a residential unit, may suggest that this phenomenon was already under way in the mid Republic. They were certainly a concern for Vitruvius, who discusses the need for building tall structures to accommodate the city's population (*De Arch.* 2.8.17). Augustus set the maximum height for buildings at 70 Roman feet (c. 21 meters), and this was lowered by an unspecified amount after the Great Fire of 64 CE, then finally reduced to 60 feet by Trajan, which in theory would have limited the number of storeys. There has however been much debate as to how many storeys this would allow, with four to five the generally accepted figure, based partly on the surviving structures at Ostia. Madelaine (2008), however, has argued from the symbols used for staircases that up to eight floors are indicated on the *Forma Urbis Romae*. In addition, the five-storey second century CE *insula* in via Giulio Romano (Packer 1968–69; Priester 2002) at the foot of the Capitoline Hill reaches over 70 Roman feet, which seems to contravene the planning law of Trajan. This may be because it was not a free-standing structure but built against the side of the hill, acting as a buttress, and may even have had a second entrance from the top. Such tall *insulae* used as terracing structures would have been well-adapted to take advantage of the natural topography of the city.

All the evidence points to *insulae*, however constituted, being the most common form of residential building in Rome housing the vast majority of the population. This is explicit in the numbers given in the Regionary Catalogues, with over 40,000 *insulae* but fewer than 2,000 *domus*; despite modern uncertainties over the precise nature, function and validity of these numbers, the contrast with the number of *domus* is universally accepted (see Guilhembet 1996). The archaeological evidence, however fragmentary, points in the same direction, and it is possible to see areas such as that east of the Corso (the ancient Via Lata) to the slopes of the Quirinal, or parts of the Campus Martius, given over almost entirely to such structures, and this is supported by the fragments of the *Forma Urbis Romae* showing domestic and commercial buildings.

Evidence for actual individual *insulae* at Rome is limited. While the names of several *insulae* in Rome are known from literary or epigraphic evidence, such as the Insula Bolani, possibly owned by the consul of 66 CE, M. Vettius Bolanus (*LTUR* 3, s.v. “Insula Bolani,” 96–7), nothing more is known about all but two of these. The structural evidence for the Insula Volusiana, identified from epigraphic evidence, unfortunately is not sufficient to give a clear reading of the type of accommodation it provided (Mazzei *et al.* 2013). The other example is the Insula Felicula, located somewhere around the Campus Flaminius, which is named in the Regionary Catalogues and was also mentioned by Tertullian (*Adv. Valent.* 7) because of its exceptional height, suggesting that it was a multistory residential building of the type familiar from Ostia. The archaeological evidence for unidentified multiple occupancy residential structures in Rome is also limited, as only very few survive to any degree, and most preserve only a partial floor plan or the elevation, but rarely both (Priester 2002).

The best-preserved example is on the slopes of the Capitoline Hill (Packer 1968–69, discussed below), and there are other substantial remains under the Piazza Colonna (no longer visible) and under SS. Giovanni e Paolo (see most recently Palazzo and Pavolini 2014; Pavolini 2014). Both these are built in brick-faced concrete, have arcades on their main facades, and are designed around central courtyards. Many older and more recent excavations have revealed evidence for this type of architecture, including under the churches of S. Lorenzo in Lucina, Sta Rufina, S. Clemente, and Sta Cecilia, under Termini Station (Barbara and Paris 1996), in the Piazza Venezia (Cucinotta 2012), in Via in Arcione (Caronna 1985), and in Via S. Vincenzo near the Trevi fountain (Insalaco 2005). In most cases only the ground floor, or just a part of it, remains, dominated by commercial units and one or more staircases from the street leading presumably to upper floor apartments. While these are often from the earliest phase of the building, most underwent later restructuring, suggesting a continuous adaptation of the urban fabric, including in several cases complete transformation into luxury *domus* of the fourth century. Similarly, while most of the non-public buildings represented on the Severan Marble Plan of Rome could with rare exceptions be thought of as *insulae*, only the largely commercial ground floor plans are shown, the external staircases from the street often being the only indication that there were independent rental properties on upper floors (Madelaine 2008).

A wide variety of living space could be included in any *insula* to suit a varied clientele. Commercial units, formed basically by a single room with wide opening to street which could be shops or workshops, dominated the ground floors. These often included extra space, whether in back rooms or on mezzanine floors (*pergulae*), which while potentially used for storage could also provide self-contained living quarters, as, in fact, could a single-roomed unit once closed for the night. In modern literature these are called *tabernae*

(Holleran 2012, 100–106; Frier 1980, 31–32), but it should be remembered that, like the term *insula* itself, ancient usage of the word carried a much wider variety of meanings, including any small or poor accommodation, and indeed an inn (e.g. Cic. *Inv. rhet.* 2.4.14–15; Val. Max. 1.7.ext 10). From the available evidence, this was overwhelmingly the dominant form of ground floor accommodation in the *insulae* of the city of Rome. Many city blocks, such as Buildings C and D on the Viminal (Barbera and Paris 1996) comprised only *tabernae* plus one or more independent staircases rising from the street, which presumably led to rental accommodation on the upper floors.

The remains of *insulae* at nearby Ostia can usefully supplement the scarce material from Rome at least for the second and third centuries CE (Packer 1971). In particular it provides the best evidence of high-status ground-floor apartments as part of multiple-occupancy *insulae*, although we have no idea how common these were at Rome (Packer 1971). The most easily recognized group comprises the so-called *medianum* apartments, named in reference to ancient legal sources which discussed questions of liability for things thrown into the street from the common rooms (*mediana*) of apartments on the upper floors of *insulae* (Hermansen 1970; 1982), although the association is not without problems (DeLaine 2004). The characteristic feature is a long rectangular central living space (the *medianum*) from which all other rooms were accessed, with one, or more commonly two, large reception rooms usually of different sizes at either end, all of which took light through large glazed windows opening onto the street or an internal courtyard or garden, and two or more private rooms or *cubicula*, often poorly lit, opening off the other side of the *medianum*. The larger often had further rooms behind the reception rooms, combined latrines and kitchens, and integral upper floors over all but the reception rooms.

This type of apartment was well-suited to insertion into long, narrow blocks either one or two *tabernae* wide, not just on the ground level but on upper floors; the only published example which survives from Rome is precisely that on the *piano nobile* of the *insula* at the foot of the Capitoline Hill (Priester 2002, 77–86), although another has recently been identified but is yet to be published. Examples from Ostia suggest that the larger upper floor apartments could also have had latrines, kitchens, and piped water. It is not at all clear whether the occasional larger and more elaborate residences built as part of the same complexes as *medianum* apartments, such as the Insula of Jove and Ganymede at Ostia (DeLaine 1999) would have been *insulae* or *domus* in antiquity. The decision by some *insula* owners to decorate the outer doors to these staircases with pilasters or columns topped by pediments, as seen most clearly at Ostia (Stöger 2007), reinforces the suggestion that at least some of the apartments they led to were of considerable luxury and status. These were presumably what are known from the written records as *cenacula*, which Frier (1977, 27) argues from the legal sources are the normal subjects

of long-term lease, and must therefore be for the wealthier inhabitants who could afford at least a half-year's rent (the minimum term) and be trusted to pay it in arrears. This must be the context of a rental notice from Pompeii for the *Insula Arriana Polliana*, which advertised *cenacula equestria* alongside *tabernae* with mezzanine floors and a number of *domus*, presumably also on the ground floor; while it is usually assumed that these are to be rented as individual units, the text does not in fact make this explicit (*CIL* 4.138; Pirson 1997).

Such well-appointed apartments should not be thought of as the standard for the *insulae* of Rome or Ostia. Ostia has many examples of simple two- to four-roomed apartments, both on the ground floor and on upper floors, as exemplified by the Casa di Diana, where inhabitants had access to a shared latrine and cistern for drinking water on the ground floor (Packer 1971). Between these simple dwellings and the *medianum* apartments, however, we have to allow for a variety of small apartments with more elaborate plans and some pretensions to higher status, presumably designed to cater for a whole range of socioeconomic conditions. The Casa di Diana also preserves a rare arrangement of rooms on the first floor, comprising a row of narrow, poorly lit cells off a corridor with a larger, presumably shared, single living room at the far end. This has a close parallel on the second floor of the *insula* at the foot of the Capitoline Hill in Rome (Priester 67–77), suggesting that this was a more common solution than is usually recognized. The form fits well with the ancient references to *deversoria* or *meritoria* (e.g. *Dig.* 7.1.13.8 (Ulpian); Petr. *Sat.* 94–95) which offered single rooms for rent and which could supply meals to the occupants. Together these buildings are useful in displaying a range of what can securely be identified as “lower class” housing. While the two- to four-room apartments might like the *cenacula* have been rented on a half-yearly or yearly basis by respectable but medium-class elements of society, the group accommodation was more likely rented by the day or week, particularly by the transient or seasonal populations we might expect in a city like Rome. We have however no direct evidence of this, nor of how many individuals occupied each apartment. Equally impossible to identify are examples where an apartment was actually shared by a number of unrelated individuals, rather than the small nuclear family we might assume, although the legal sources strongly suggest this was a common happening (Frier 1977; 1980).

Guide to Further Reading

There is no single work that covers all the issues raised here. Storey 2004 gives a thorough analysis of the possible meanings of the term *insula*, while Frier 1977 and 1980 together still provide the best and most accessible

treatment of the issues of rental accommodation. Priester 2002 covers the most important of the archaeological evidence and includes a good selection of ancient sources. There are short entries on *insulae* known by name in *LTUR*. The only detailed survey of the apartment blocks of Ostia remains that of Packer 1971, while for newer interpretations see DeLaine 1999 and 2004.

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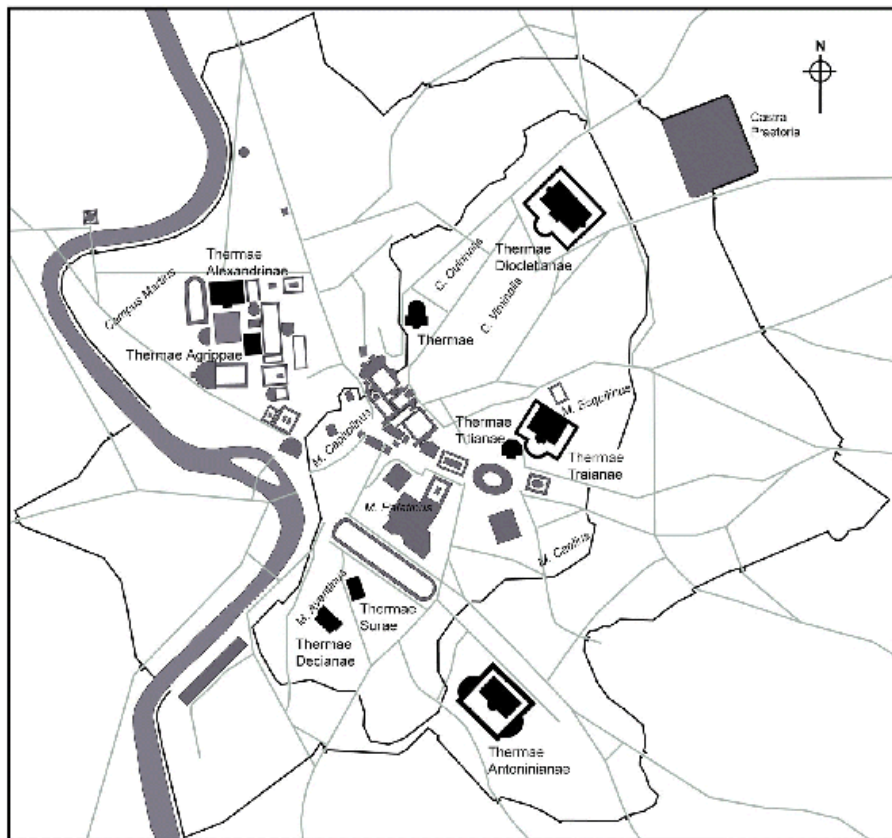
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CHAPTER FIFTEEN

The Imperial *Thermae*

Janet DeLaine

The “baths built like whole provinces” were some of the wonders of Rome which impressed the emperor Constantius II, visiting Rome for the first time in 357 CE (Amm. Marc. 16.10.14), and their remains still occupy substantial parts of the city today. The largest of the imperial *thermae*, the Baths of Trajan, Caracalla, and Diocletian, are among the most extensive and complex single buildings of imperial Rome, larger even than the imperial palace on the Palatine, and as a result they transformed the physical shape and organization of large sections of the city ([Map 12](#)). If “whole provinces” is an exaggeration, they were nevertheless the size of small towns, such as the Trajanic colony of Timgad, in modern Algeria, close in overall area to the contemporary the Baths of Trajan. As well as providing for all the hygienic, medicinal and social functions associated with ordinary Roman baths since the late Republic, the imperial *thermae* added a level of luxury and a range of cultural opportunities usually associated with elite *otium*. By doing so on an unprecedented scale, serving thousands of clients at any one time, they created new urban foci to rival, if not outstrip, the imperial fora.



Map 12 Rome, schematic plan showing Imperial *thermae* (in black) and other major monuments (in grey). (Janet DeLaine).

The Nature of the Evidence

The only place the imperial *thermae* are listed together is in the fourth-century Regionary Catalogues which give eleven names, all of which are confirmed independently in other sources, although these generally tell us very little about them as buildings. These are: the Baths of Agrippa (completed by 12 BCE), Nero/Severus Alexander (dedicated 62 CE, rebuilt 226 CE), Titus (dedicated 80 CE), Trajan (dedicated 109 CE), Licinius Sura (Trajanic), Commodus (180–192 CE), Septimius Severus (c. 200 CE), Caracalla (217 CE), Trajanus Decius (249–252 CE), Diocletian (dedicated 305/6 CE), and Constantine (after 312 CE). The Baths of Sura, Commodus, and Septimius Severus are not mentioned after the fourth century, and these are also the only three for which no archaeological evidence remains. The Baths of Sura, however, appear on a fragment of the early third-century Marble Plan, giving some indication of their location and plan, but labelled “Bal(neum) Surae”,

not “*Thermae Surae*”. According to the *Historia Augusta* (Sev. 19), Septimius Severus also built public baths across the Tiber in Transtiberim, but there is no independent evidence to support this.

Those of the *thermae* which appear to have survived as functioning baths beyond the fourth century (the Baths of Agrippa, Caracalla, Constantine, Diocletian, Nero/Severus Alexander, and Trajan) had ceased to operate by the early sixth, although not necessarily simply because the Goths cut the aqueducts, as many scholars assume (Nielsen 1992, 57; Yegül 1992, 152; cf. DeLaine 1988, 21–22). By the later sixth century several had had small churches or other ecclesiastical institutions installed in them, such as the early fifth century *titulus* of St Cyriacus in the precinct of the Baths of Diocletian (Serlorenzi and Laurenti 2002, 81–83), while the open areas were often used for burials, as happened in the Baths of Caracalla and Trajan in the sixth and seventh centuries (Cecchini 1985; Carboni 2010). Most of the major *thermae* were still however recorded under their correct names into the eleventh century.

In the new conditions of the emerging Renaissance, the Baths of Agrippa and of Nero/ Severus Alexander in the old Campus Martius, which had become an important center of the medieval city because of its proximity to St Peter’s, disappeared soonest, as they were physically incorporated into the palaces of the rich and powerful, while the outlying great *thermae* of Trajan, Caracalla, and Diocletian were systematically searched for sculpture and looted of any other valuable materials. In the 1540s, for example, Alexander Farnese, later Pope Paul III, financed excavations in the Baths of Caracalla which provided fine marbles for the decoration of the Palazzo Farnese and sculptures for his personal collection, now in the National Archaeological Museum in Naples (DeLaine 1997, 41–2). Use was also found for any rooms of the *thermae* which still retained their vaults; while the transformation of the central section of the Baths of Diocletian into the church of Sta Maria degli Angeli is the most notable, other parts of the same baths were at various times used as papal warehouses for grain and oil (Serlorenzi and Laurenti 2002, 81–3). In general, the large open areas provided vineyards and market gardens for various religious bodies, and, unless demolition was actively desired, as in the old Campus Martius area, the main structures were simply left as ruins. Although the Baths of Diocletian were gradually absorbed into the fabric of modern Rome after the Risorgimento they nevertheless still dominate the area next to the main railway station (Stazione Termini), while the Baths of Caracalla (Figure 15.1) and Trajan remain as open areas, the one a state archaeological monument and the other a public park.

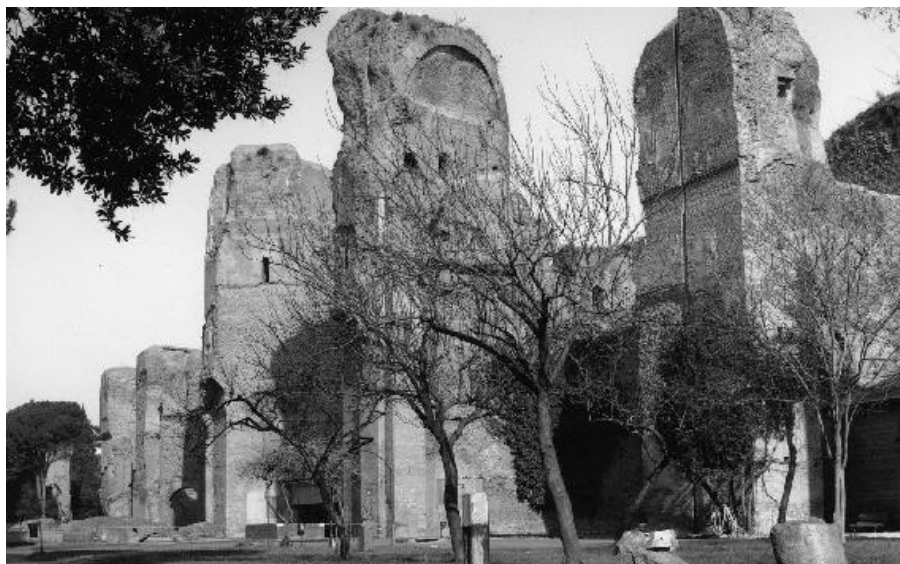


Figure 15.1 Rome, remains of the Baths of Caracalla (*caldarium* and SW façade of central block), now a state monument.

Photograph: J. DeLaine.

Irrespective of the use made of the remains, from at least the mid-fifteenth century onwards, the *thermae* were measured and drawn by artists and architects, such as Antonio da Sangallo and Sebastiano Serlio, interested in the antiquities of Rome as inspiration for their own creations. While the field sketches are important for reconstructing the *thermae* in their late phases, it is the reconstructions, particularly those by Palladio (Bertotti Scamozzi and Ortolani 1797), that have been the most influential, though these need to be treated with caution (cf. Zorzi and Fiocco 1959, Figs 64, 89, 90 for the Baths of Titus). The remains continued to be drawn, but not until the nineteenth century were there systematic campaigns by the Grand Prix de Rome architects based at the École Française (Uginet, Rossetto and Sartorio 1992, 2–35 (Baths of Diocletian), 47–57 (Baths of Trajan), 234–54 (Baths of Caracalla)). By then, however, rather less remained, but the works of Blouet (1828) and Paulin (1890) in particular remain of great value, as both involved limited excavation as well as detailed recording of what remained above ground.

Origins and Architectural Development

According to the literary sources, the earliest of the imperial *thermae*, the Baths of Agrippa, were closely associated with Agrippa's luxurious private estate (the *horti Agrippae*) in the Campus Martius with their gardens and

works of art (Cass. Dio 54.29.4). By leaving the baths to the Roman people in his will (12 BCE), it would appear that Agrippa was allowing the urban populace a taste of the life of *otium* enjoyed by the rich and powerful, establishing the guiding principle of all the later *thermae*. The Baths of Nero must have been even more lavish, to judge from Martial's comment: "What worse than Nero, what better than Nero's baths?" (7. 4), and even in the fifth century the Baths of Agrippa and Nero were coupled together (Sid. Apoll. *Carm.* 23.495–6) as by-words in luxurious bathing. Indeed, the distinction between the ordinary *balneae* for everyday bathing and the imperial *thermae* lay predominantly in the greater scale and richness associated with everything imperial.

Of the eleven *thermae* in operation in the fourth century, only the three largest – the Baths of Trajan, Caracalla, and Diocletian – survive in any recognizable form (Figure 15.2a, c, e) and even then, those of Trajan are very fragmentary (Licht 1974). Not even the exact locations of the Baths of Commodus and Septimius Severus have been determined (although they were certainly close together, in Regio I east of the Via Appia outside the old Porta Capena). For the rest, we rely largely on Renaissance drawings for any idea of their overall layout, as with the Baths of Titus (Figure 15.2b), though the archaeological evidence shows that these plans do not represent the original structures but later phases. Hardly anything of the Baths of Agrippa or Titus appears to be earlier than Hadrian (cf. Caruso *et al.* 1990), and both were again substantially restored or extended in the third century; in the same period the Baths of Nero were so comprehensively rebuilt (Fig. 15.2d) that they subsequently took the name of the emperor responsible, Severus Alexander (Ghini 1988).

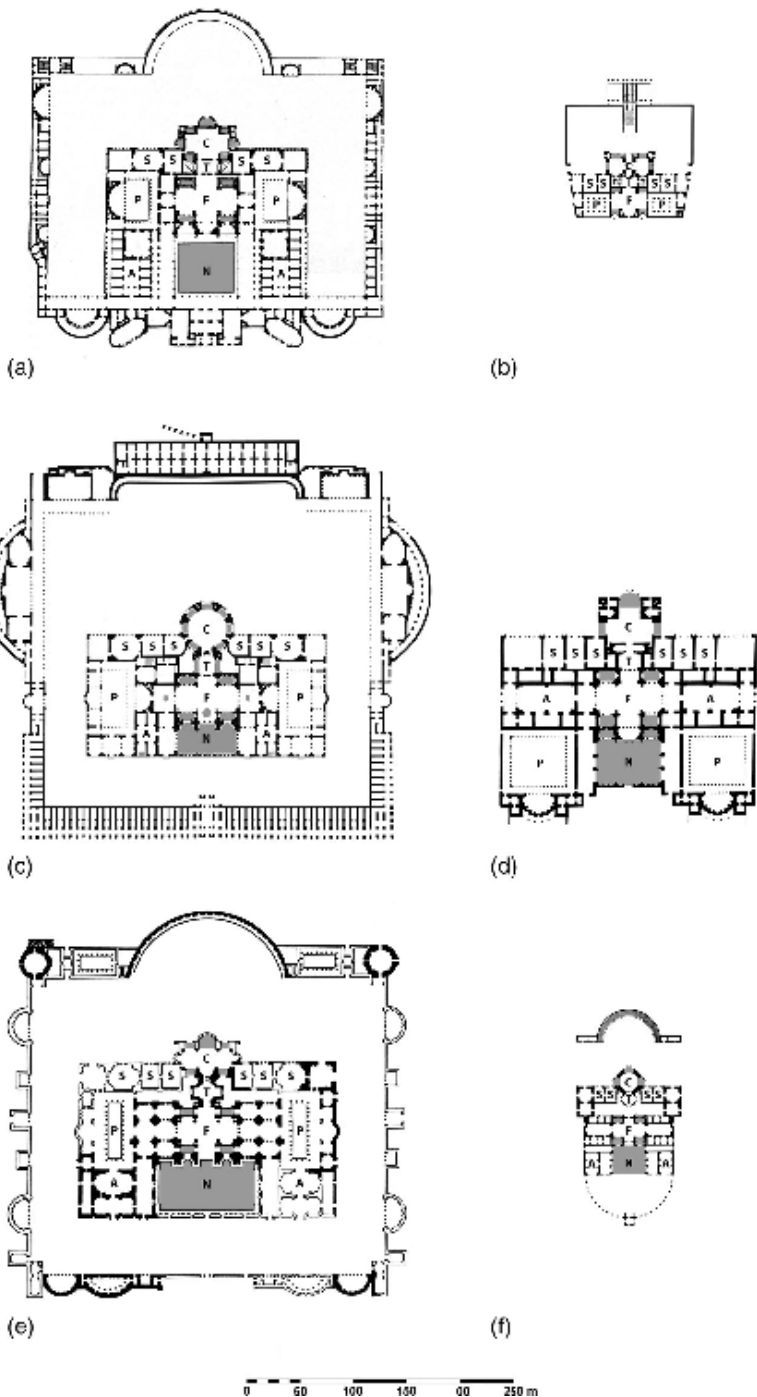


Figure 15.2 Imperial *thermae*, restored plans: a) Baths of Trajan; b) Baths of Titus; c) Baths of Caracalla; d) Baths of Severus Alexander; e) Baths of Diocletian; f) Baths of Constantine. Author. Key: A – apodyterium; C – caldarium; F – frigidarium; N – natatio; P – palaestra; S – sudatorium; T –

Although these gaps in our knowledge make it difficult to follow the development of the *thermae* in any detail, a general pattern emerges. All the evidence for the Baths of Agrippa suggests they had a complex but asymmetric plan unlike any of the later *thermae* (Huelssen 1910), not surprising in a new creation. The Trajanic Baths of Sura were also asymmetric but simpler in design, similar to the Flavian Central Baths at Pompeii or the Hadrianic Baths of Neptune at Ostia. Since these were one of the few not attributed to one of the emperors, and appear to have been originally designated *balneum* rather than *thermae*, they may in fact have not been classed among the *thermae* at all until the late empire.

All the rest in their final form had symmetrical plans, the bathing blocks dominated by a large rectangular vaulted *frigidarium* and a similar-sized *caldarium* projecting from the south or south-west façade, both aligned on the main short axis, as in the Baths of Trajan (Figure 15.2a). Since both the Baths of Nero and of Titus were completely rebuilt at later dates, however, this plan type cannot be proven to be any earlier than Trajan. The other distinctive feature, the large open precinct elaborated with *exedrae* and halls into which the bathing block is set, is also not found until the Baths of Trajan. There is also a change in scale. Even in their later forms, the Baths of Agrippa and Titus are barely one-third or less the size of the Baths of Trajan, which are equaled only by those of Caracalla and Diocletian, and, in terms of the size of the bathing block, by the rebuilt Baths of Nero/ Severus Alexander. On the whole, therefore, it is the Baths of Trajan that are most likely to have marked a new direction in design as well as a notable increase in size, both of which developments can arguably be attributed to Apollodorus of Damascus, the architect of Trajan's Forum (Cass. Dio 69.4.1). These then formed a blueprint for the other really large *thermae*, those of Caracalla and Diocletian, and a model for refashioning the earlier complexes.

The Large Imperial *Thermae*

All three of these large imperial *thermae*, composed of a central bathing block set within a vast enclosed precinct, are remarkably similar in concept, basic organization and functioning (Figure 15.2). The basic bathing rooms which had already been established for late Republican civic baths were incorporated into the central blocks: *apodyteria* (A) for removing clothes; *palaestrae* (P) for exercise; *sudatoria* (S) or *laconica* for raising the body temperature in a sauna and removing the excess dirt and sweat using a strigil; *caldaria* (C) for washing in hot water; and *frigidaria* (F) for closing the pores by plunging in cold water. The central blocks are, however, on a completely different scale to the earlier baths, covering an area of 25,000–35,000 square meters, or more

than 20 times larger than the whole of the late Republican Forum Baths at Pompeii, which would fit easily into the *frigidarium* of any of the imperial *thermae* (DeLaine 1992, 258–61).

Not only was the scale vastly enlarged, but the functional organization of the late-Republican baths was completely rethought. Space for social interaction was emphasized by increasing the number and size of the unheated spaces, and placing an enlarged *frigidarium* at the center of the design. In the Baths of Trajan, for example, the unheated rooms occupy 79 % of the total area of the bathing block compared to 40 % in the Forum Baths at Pompeii. The balance of heated spaces was also altered. The *tepidarium*, in earlier baths a moderately heated room often with a tepid pool, was greatly reduced in size relative to the *caldarium*, becoming primarily a type of heat lock between hot and cold rooms, while the amount of space given to saunas was substantially increased by inserting a range of dry heated rooms into the bathing sequence in place of the single *laconicum*, which had only been a subsidiary to the main rooms in earlier baths, if it existed at all. The *palaestra*, which had once been a separate element found in association with some earlier baths, were incorporated into the body of the bathing block in the imperial *thermae*, as was a large open-air swimming pool (the *natatio*).

The key to incorporating all these features into the design of the bathing block was the choice of a symmetrical scheme in place of the simple linear plan of the late Republican baths, with a sequence of *natatio*, *frigidarium*, *tepidarium*, and *caldarium* along its central axis. The remaining rooms were all symmetrical about this axis, and fall into three groups. Flanking the *natatio* are smaller rooms which must have functioned as entrances, reception rooms and *apodyteria*. Either side of the *caldarium* are a series of two or three dry saunas, some of which may also have served for massage, depilation, and/or oiling, with an additional room of uncertain function at each end of the row, possibly only lightly heated or not at all, as in the Baths of Diocletian. Between these two groups, and symmetrical about the long axis of the *frigidarium*, lie the *palaestrae*, rectangular colonnaded spaces usually interpreted as open courts, although some scholars prefer to see them as covered basilical halls (e.g. Nielsen 1992, 50, 54, contra DeLaine 1993, 356–8). The layout provided for a standard itinerary of undressing (A), gentle exercise (P), a dry sauna followed by strigilling (S), before a warm soak in the hot pool (C), and returning from there via the *tepidarium* to take a cold dip in a plunge (F) or the swimming pool (N), before dressing. This circular route meant that the bathers had no need to retrace their steps, and in fact the interlocking pattern of spaces along the two axes further offered a much wider range of possible itineraries. The large halls alongside the *frigidarium* and *natatio*, particularly well-developed in the Baths of Diocletian, had no specific bathing function and provided space above all for social intercourse.

In the fifth century, the Baths of Diocletian were said to have had 3,000 seats

for bathers (Olympiodorus, *ap.* Phot. p. 63a, lines 23–30), and this should give at least some indication of the numbers expected to use the baths at any one time, although calculations based on the capacity of hot pools suggest that over the course of the normal opening hours for baths (in the afternoon for men) a throughput in excess of 10,000 actual bathers each day would be feasible. The symmetrical scheme helped to overcome some of the practical difficulties created by serving so many people at a time. The design allowed for large number of bathers arriving individually or in groups over a period of time, and then pursuing different itineraries as well as spending different amounts of time in each space. Increasing the number of entrances, doubling the facilities for the secondary spaces, and providing multiple pools in the *frigidarium* and *caldarium* all helped to improve circulation, while having several small *apodyteria* provided more wall space for storing clients' clothes than was possible in a single large room.

Modifications also had to be made to the traditional hypocaust heating system to cope with the scale of the buildings. Rather than the single furnace (*prae-furnium*) in the late Republican baths, multiple *prae-furnia* were needed to heat the imperial *thermae*. The *caldarium* of the Baths of Caracalla had at least eight under the central space in addition to the ones serving each of the seven pools, while all the dry sweating rooms and the two pools of the *tepidarium* had their own as well (Lombardi and Corazzo 1995, 50–57). The water was initially heated separately in metal tanks, again with their own *prae-furnia*. Dry sweating rooms depended for their proper functioning on the radiant heat transmitted by the *tubuli* lining their walls, and this must have limited the maximum possible size of the space if all bathers were to achieve the necessary elevated body temperature. Here again multiplying the number of rooms rather than increasing their size was the solution. Thermal efficiency was a key factor even in the overall alignment of the large imperial *thermae*, so that all the heated spaces apart from the *tepidarium* faced south-west to take advantage of the afternoon sun.

The *thermae* were lavish with the use of water, far beyond the simple requirements of bathing. The Baths of Caracalla needed roughly 5,000 cubic meters of water to fill all the pools of the central block, including over 2,000 cubic meters for the *nataatio* alone (Lombardi and Corazza 1995, 59–81). The north façade of the *nataatio* was treated as a monumental nymphaeum, enriched with columns, niches, and sculpture, and fed from nine fountains, with at least a further twenty small basins and fountains throughout the central block. As with the heating, the design of the central block facilitated the supply and removal of water by concentrating its pools, basins and fountains along the two main axes and the north façade. As the large swimming pools in the other two buildings imply similarly extravagant displays of water, it is not surprising that each of the three great *thermae* was supplied from its own aqueduct, the Baths of Trajan from a completely new line (the Aqua Traiana),

and the Baths of Caracalla and Diocletian from new branch lines (the Aqua Antoniniana and Aqua Iovia respectively) of the Aqua Marcia, to which new sources had been added. Large cisterns, including the Sette Sale with a capacity of more than 8,000 cubic meters which served the Baths of Trajan (Licht *et al.* 1990), were fed from the aqueducts but held no more than enough for two days' operation. Filling overnight when the pools were emptied and cleaned, they provided fresh water for the start of the next day's bathing, the surplus held in reserve in case the supply was interrupted. During the hours the *thermae* were operational, cold water appears to have run continuously in the fountains providing fresh water in pools and basins. Although all the water ran in lead pipes, the high lime content of the water quickly formed a deposit, removing any possibility of contamination.

While the central blocks of the imperial *thermae* provided all the necessary bathing facilities, they only occupied between one-third and one-quarter of the total area of the rectangular precincts, the rest being largely open space. In Rome's hilly topography, creating flat spaces of around 100,000 square meters required artificial terracing, which also provided discreet service areas for the *thermae*. No ancient sources explain the function of the precincts proper, but the open spaces are usually and convincingly restored as gardens with fountains and formal walks, albeit on tenuous evidence. In the Baths of Caracalla, the precinct was bordered on at least three sides with a colonnaded portico. All had a number of covered halls, open *exedrae* and airy pavilions on the periphery, most of uncertain function but including libraries and displays of art. Altogether, the precincts could thus house the kind of cultural pursuits, including walking for leisure and discussion, usually associated with the Greek gymnasium (Yegül 1992, 172–83). The influence of the gymnasium may not, however, have been a direct import from the eastern empire for the Baths of Trajan, despite the eastern origins of the architect Apollodorus. As the seat of Greek education both physical and mental, the gymnasium had already been a strong conceptual influence on late Republican luxury villas and *horti*, and in turn one of the contributing elements to the cultural milieu of the Campus Martius which formed the setting for the Baths of Agrippa and Nero. The shape and layout of the precincts, as well as some of their functional aspects, for example, owe much to the public porticoes of the Campus Martius, such as the display of works of art in the Porticus of Pompey's Theatre (Plin. *HN* 7.34), or the libraries which were a feature of Augustus's Porticus Octaviae (Suet. *Gram. et rhet.* 21; Plut. *Marc.* 30).

The association of the gymnasium with physical exercise and athletic competitions (*agones*) was equally as important an influence on the *thermae*. According to Suetonius (*Nero* 12), Nero built both baths and a gymnasium in the Campus Martius. He also instigated short-lived Greek games including athletics and music contests at Rome, erecting a temporary stadium in the Campus Martius for them, but only under Domitian were they put on a regular

footing as the Capitoline Games, with a permanent stadium and *odeon* built to house them (Suet. *Dom.* 5). The precincts of all the large *thermae* have a large curvilinear projection on the side opposite the main entrance. Because the semicircular projections in the Baths of Trajan and Diocletian resemble a theater and were shown with steps in early drawings, while that of the Baths of Caracalla is shaped like half a stadium and is a stade long, it has been proposed that these were for performances, including athletic displays, to entertain the clientele. While it is not clear whether any actual games were held in the precincts of the great imperial *thermae*, the Baths of Trajan certainly had a role to play in the world of Greek athletics at Rome (Volpe 2007). The association of professional athletes belonging to the cult of Hercules was given permission by Trajan to use his *thermae* for practice, and within 30 years had been granted space to establish headquarters there by Antoninus Pius.

In combining in his new *thermae* extensive, sophisticated and luxurious bathing facilities with the largest public park in Rome outside of the Campus Martius, Trajan was making an astute political move. Unlike Vespasian, who had transformed a part of Nero's Domus Aurea into a venue for popular but limited entertainment by building his amphitheater, Trajan had created a whole "villa for the people" (Grimal 1943, 197) which gave all the population a chance to experience for a few hours at a time the *otium* of the rich and powerful. The Baths of Trajan then became the model on which the subsequent *thermae* were based. What is more, they did not simply provide a general idea for dealing with the same functional requirements in a similar type of building, but a very precise archetype. The bathing blocks in particular all followed the same complex design rules, used the same relatively limited repertoire of room shapes, employed the same decorative schemes, and used the same often specialized construction techniques. At the same time, no two of them are identical, revealing the hand of the anonymous architect of each new scheme and the desires of each new emperor for a unique monument to his name. The *thermae* thus became signature buildings which had only rare architectural parallels outside of Rome.

As part of this imperial blueprint, the Baths of Trajan seem to have provided a detailed model in terms of construction. All the *thermae* are essentially built of brick-faced and vaulted concrete, the standard building technique of imperial Rome, but used with an exceptional degree of sophistication and incorporating some specialized techniques hardly ever found outside of major imperial buildings. These include the use of graduated aggregate in the concrete with a light pumice-like material used at the crown of the vaults in order to achieve the wide span of the *frigidaria* and other great vaults, and the insertion of iron bars embedded in the concrete vaults over the colonnades of the *palaestrae* to resist the tension (Lancaster 2005, 60–63, 116–18, 124). Iron bars were also used to support decorative elements in many of the large

vaults, including possibly the extraordinary bronze ceiling of the *caldarium* which made the Baths of Caracalla one of the wonders of late antiquity (DeLaine 1987). The importance of the building materials and construction techniques in defining these structures is shown in the Baths of Diocletian, where a whole brick industry had to be recreated to supply the materials (Steinby 1986).

Such a blueprint would have provided technical and logistical advantages in terms of erecting these exceptional buildings, particularly when there had been a long break since the last project, but it also had ideological advantages. Without it, it would have been very difficult either to recreate a design scheme or to erect a structure with such notable efficiency, so that it had an important role in maintaining imperial exclusivity. The decorative schemes also spoke of the power to command unlimited resources, from the colored “imperial” marbles on floors and walls representing the extent of empire, to the giant monolithic column shafts of Egyptian granite, those under the cross-vaults of the *frigidaria* at 42 Roman feet equaling those of the Pantheon porch. Altogether, the Baths of Caracalla, for example, needed 252 columns and over 100 pieces of sculpture for the central block alone, unthinkable in any context other than an imperial commission (DeLaine 1997, 69–84). Such exclusivity was one of the major sources of imperial power.

The *Thermae* and the City

The building of the imperial *thermae* could not fail to have had an impact on the city of Rome, from their inception onwards (Map 12). Land had to be acquired, and, outside of the Campus Martius, none of the preserved *thermae* were built on empty ground. The Baths of Titus and Trajan utilized mainly imperial property which had once been part of Nero’s Domus Aurea, although there are substantial remains of at least four other structures under the western corner of the Baths of Trajan which appear to have been a mix of private and possibly small public buildings (Volpe 2010a). The dedicatory inscription of the Baths of Diocletian, on the other hand, records purchase of buildings as required by the great size of the project (*CIL* 6.1130 = 31242), and excavations have shown that these also were a mix of mainly domestic with some public buildings, including possibly the Temple of the Gens Flavia (Tagliamonte 1998, 3–4; Candilio Arietti, Martines, Vigna 2000–2001). Both of these occupied fairly central spaces, but the Baths of Caracalla were built outside the old Servian walls in a typical area of the *suburbium* comprising suburban villas and tombs.

Between the demolition of existing buildings and the need for extensive artificial terracing to create the necessary platforms, the three large imperial *thermae* complexes totally transformed their immediate surroundings.

Fragments of the Marble Plan showing the area around the Baths of Trajan reveal the awkward juxtapositions between the Baths and the surrounding urban layout, while the Baths of Diocletian, filling the head of the valley which once existed between the Quirinal and Viminal hills, eliminated the upper stretch of the ancient *vicus Longus*, thus changing the ancient pattern of circulation. In contrast, the three-storey façade of the Baths of Caracalla brought the city to what was once an outlying area, towering over a newly created street (the Via Nova) in the valley of the old Via Appia.

The remarkably short construction time for each of the large *thermae* – five years (104–109 CE) for the Baths of Trajan, six (212–217 CE) for the Baths of Caracalla, and seven or eight (298–305 or 306 CE) for the Baths of Diocletian – required exceptionally large workforces, providing employment for many of Rome’s tradesmen and laborers. It has been estimated that at a minimum the Baths of Caracalla employed on average between 6,000 and 10,000 men working on site at any one time (DeLaine 1997), the sort of numbers who would eventually use the baths daily. In addition there would have been up to 5,000 men producing materials in the hinterland of Rome, including those operating the continuous trains of ox-carts arriving at the site every day. Much of the on-site labor was unskilled laboring which could have been recruited from the urban poor of Rome, while masons formed the largest group of semiskilled workers. In addition at least 700 marble workers were needed for carving and erecting the architectural orders, and 500 other decorators in the final year. The influx of so many workers must have put a strain on services such as taverns or lodgings or local bakeries, while the delivery of building materials would have disrupted the normal flow of traffic, already affected by the construction site itself. The finished *thermae* also would have needed a substantial workforce for their maintenance and operation, although both numbers and specific roles are difficult to determine. Despite the meagre epigraphic record, a number of imperial freedmen appear as members of the administration related to the *thermae*, including a superintendent (*vilicus*) of the Baths of Nero, and an administrative assistant (*adiutor*) and a financial controller (*exactor*) for the Baths of Trajan (*CIL* 6.8676, 8677, 8678). The only ordinary worker recorded is the cloakroom attendant (*capsarius*) at the Baths of Caracalla (*CIL* 6.9232).

By the time the Baths of Constantine were finished, few in the city lived more than a kilometer from at least one of the imperial *thermae*, and most within 600 meters. The distribution was not, however, uniform and several of the *thermae*, such as the Baths of Agrippa and Nero in the Campus Martius and the Baths of Titus and Trajan on the lower slopes of the Esquiline, were built close to each other. There seems no obvious logic to this pairing of the *thermae*, no indication in our sources that these were, for example, differentiated into men’s and women’s baths.¹ The explanation might lie in the specific locations of the *thermae*, which are unlikely to have been chosen

at random. It was logical that the Baths of Agrippa, together with his *stagnum* (a formal pool created from a natural swamp) were erected in the open space of the Campus Martius, an area long associated with physical exercise (including swimming) and with the training of the Roman people for war. From the middle of the first century BCE, this area had also become the site for building major venues for public spectacles – the theatres of Pompey, Marcellus and Balbus, the amphitheater of Statilius Taurus – to celebrate military victories, which were then used for games in relation to religious and state festivals. Even the *saepta*, the voting enclosure of the *comitia* planned by Caesar but completed by Agrippa, was used for gladiatorial displays and *naumachiae* under Augustus (Cass. Dio 53.23, 55.8, 10). Given the crowds which must have congregated in this part of the Campus Martius on such occasions, the popularity of the Baths of Agrippa and the Baths of Nero built beside them, comes as no surprise.

This association of baths and buildings for public spectacles also appears to have influenced the siting of the Baths of Titus, erected to coincide with the opening of the Flavian amphitheater and positioned with its main access from the valley of the Colosseum. These particular *thermae* had symbolic force in turning part of Nero's infamous Domus Aurea over to the enjoyment of the people of Rome (cf. Mart. *Spect.* 2.7–8; Suet. *Tit.* 7, 3). Trajan took further advantage of the remnants of the Domus Aurea for his *thermae*, using the Esquiline Wing as part of the terraced substructures. The main entrance, however, was from the northern high side of the heavily populated Esquiline hill, close to the Porticus Liviae, a type of building most associated with the Campus Martius. The near contemporary Baths of Sura were on the Aventine, a high-status residential area, but also overlooking the Circus Maximus, the most important of all venues for the entertainment of the Roman people, and in the valley south of the Circus and east of the Via Appia may have been the Baths of Commodus (recorded in the Regionary Catalogues as being in Regio I). Septimius Severus paid particular attention to the south-east corner of the Palatine, building a monumental nymphaeum facing the start of the Via Appia, making it unsurprising that both his *thermae* (also in Regio I, like those of Commodus) and those of his son Caracalla were close by. There may also have been shrewd political reasons for choosing an area along the Via Appia, as Septimius Severus had installed the first legion ever stationed near Rome at nearby Albanum along that very road; the militaristic decoration of the Baths of Caracalla may have been geared towards the soldiers spending their leisure at the Baths. Maximian may similarly have had the military in mind when siting the Baths of Diocletian on the Viminal, with its main entrance facing north towards the exercise ground and barracks of the Praetorian Guard. If a late source is to be believed, the Baths of Trajan also became associated with the military under Diocletian, who is said to have set up a shrine to Aesculapius there where the urban cohorts were expected to sacrifice (*The Passion of Saints Claudius, Nicostratus, Simphorianus*,

Castorius and Simplicius). The Baths of Trajan at least certainly had gained an important role for the display of official notices by 238 CE, when an imperial rescript from Skaptopara in modern Bulgaria (*CIL* 3.12336) was set up in its porticoes, although we cannot tell if this was a practice common to all the *thermae*.

The imperial *thermae* were identified very closely with their builders, the emperors. Their style was distinctive: on a general level in plan morphology; in specific elements of the elevation such as the great triple cross-vaulted halls; in exotic construction techniques such as the use of iron for ties and in vaulting; and in decoration, such as the unnecessary giant granite monoliths which appear to support them. Earlier imperial *thermae* – those of Agrippa, Titus and Nero – were rebuilt apparently to conform closer to this evolving imperial model in the second and third centuries CE. Behind these buildings was an exclusive imperial blueprint, a complex and highly elegant design process which was not available to the average architect and could not easily be guessed. The scale of the largest, the Baths of Trajan, Caracalla, and Diocletian, and the extravagance of the materials and construction techniques used, placed these among the wonders of Rome, even in that city of wonders, demonstrating an unchallengeable command of resources and a power to transform the landscape which put nature to shame. That all of this was not in the names of the gods or the workings of government, but ostensibly in the interest of the physical and cultural health of the people of Rome, only increased their symbolic power. The importance of this association was recognized even by Constantine ([Figure 15.2f](#)), who built his own imperial *thermae* on the spur of the Quirinal, small in scale but retaining the main elements of the iconic plan and with a circular *caldarium* seen elsewhere only in the Baths of Caracalla, one of the wonders of fourth-century Rome.

Guide to Further Reading

Literary sources and archaeological evidence for all the imperial *thermae* are collected in the relevant entries in *LTUR* 5. The most important works since then are: La Follette [1994](#) (Baths of Decian); Licht [2004](#); Volpe [2010b](#) (Baths of Trajan); Candilio *et al.* [2000–2001](#) (Baths of Diocletian); Lombardi and Corazza [1995](#); DeLaine [1997](#); Jenewein [2008](#) (Baths of Caracalla). Very little of this has as yet been incorporated into wider studies of the *thermae* or their role in the city of Rome. There is still no single comprehensive monograph which addresses the development and significance of the imperial *thermae*, although they have been discussed in every general book on Roman baths, most usefully by Nielsen [1992](#) and Yegül [1992](#); the latter gives the most coherent account, although not without problems (see DeLaine [1993](#), 355–8). The small volumes by Piranomonte [1998](#) and Tagliamonte [1998](#) provide up-

to-date introductions to the Baths of Caracalla and the Baths of Diocletian respectively. For recent insights into the political and social implications of the *thermae* see Zajack 1999 and Zanker 2010, 61–66, 75–87.

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ENDNOTE

1. Although one late source (Chron. 146) reports that, under Trajan, women bathed in the Baths of Trajan, this should not be taken to mean that *only* women were allowed to bathe there.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Libraries and Literary Culture in Rome

Matthew Nicholls

In 8 CE the urbane poet Ovid was sent by Augustus into exile at Tomis on the Black Sea coast of what is now Romania. In the first poem of the third volume of the lugubrious *Tristia* he composed there, longing to return to Rome, he sent his newly written book on an imaginary tour of the city he would never see again. The book's trip around Rome concludes with its failure to gain admission to the city's public libraries:

I [the book] am led to the shining temples of the unshorn god [Augustus's Palatine Temple of Apollo]...

Whatever men of old or more recent times conceived in their learned hearts

Lies open to be inspected by readers.

I was searching for my brothers, except of course those

Whose own father wished he had never begotten them.

The guard placed in charge of those places order me to depart
from the sacred spot as I searched in vain.

I make for other temples, next door to a theater [the Porticus Octaviae]:

These too are not to be approached by my feet.

Nor does Liberty allow me to touch her halls [the Atrium Libertatis],

which were the first to lie open to learned books

Ov. Tr. 3.1.60, 63–72. (c. 12 CE).

The Augustan city thus contained no fewer than three public libraries by 12 CE, all of which Ovid's book tried in vain to enter. These new libraries made an immediate impression on the city's literary life. Within a very few years of the foundation of the Palatine library, Ovid's contemporary Horace, for example, was advising fellow-poets on what to do if they wished "to fill [it] with books, an offering worthy of Apollo" (*Hor. Epist.* 2.1.214–218; cf. *Epist.* 1.3.15–20). As we will see, these libraries were in some sense public institutions, housed in large and well-decorated buildings (see appendix for sources related to public libraries in Rome).

Roman Literary Life Under the Republic

In library provision as in many other fields, Augustus set a pattern that would be followed by his successors for centuries. The lively “golden age” literary scene of Augustan Rome was his achievement, with its oral performances, lectures, debate, and recitals alongside learned reading and writing and the circulation of texts, but it was also the fruit of over two centuries of gradual development. Rome’s literary culture had initially developed through contact with and emulation of the Greek world. The earliest exponents of Latin literature, Livius Andronicus around 240 BCE, and Plautus a generation or so later, translated and adapted Greek plays for the Roman stage, suggesting a burgeoning appetite for literary entertainment in the city. Roman authors continued to look to the Greek world for models, and over time Rome developed a complicated attitude towards the older, better-established literary, philosophical, and artistic culture of her Greek neighbors.

In the first half of the second century BCE Rome’s Macedonian wars and the wars with Antiochus introduced Roman generals directly to the books, authors, and libraries of the Greek world. Book collections swelled their returning baggage trains along with much other precious and prestigious material. After the defeat of Perseus of Macedon at Pydna in 168 BCE, for example, L. Aemilius Paulus and his two sons were able to acquire his library (Isid. *Origines* 6.5.1; Plut. *Aem.* 28.11). This was the first large book collection to be brought to Rome as booty and seems to have had an immediate effect on the literary life of the city in general and of this family in particular. The younger son, Publius Cornelius Scipio Aemilianus, became a central figure of Roman letters in the mid-second century BCE, and a friend of writers in both Latin (Lucilius, Terence) and Greek (the philosopher Panaetius and historian Polybius). Polybius spent seventeen years working as an honored captive at Rome, writing that historical research required, among other things, a “town rich in documents or a library close by” (12.27.4–5). Since his own work draws on numerous Hellenistic writers, we must assume that by this date Rome was capable of fulfilling his requirements. Polybius was only one of innumerable Greek émigrés, exiles, and fortune-seekers in Rome, drawn there by growing resources of books, patronage, and pupils, who in their turn stimulated and contributed to the city’s literary life (31.24.7; cf. Strabo 14.5.15).

The dictator Sulla and the gourmandizing *triumphator* Lucullus also brought well-known book collections to Rome in the first century BCE. Lucullus’s library in particular was a center for scholarly activity for visiting Greeks, who flocked there “as if to some lodging of the Muses” (Plut. *Luc.* 42) and for Romans including Cicero, who set a dialogue, the lost *Hortensius*, in the

library. The excavations at the contemporary Villa of the Papyri at Herculaneum, with colonnaded gardens and statue collections as well as books (mostly Greek Epicurean philosophy), give us a glimpse of this world of privileged late Republican literary *otium* (Sider 2005).

Meanwhile, Roman literature by the first century BCE was spreading into new genres, adapting Greek literary, historiographical, and geographical models to take account of the dominance of Rome. Latin writers adapted not only Greek drama and poetry but also prose works including the sorts of technical and philosophical treatises written under the Hellenistic kings. Late Republican literary figures like Varro and Cicero could draw on very extensive libraries, and both were personally interested in the acquisition and ordering of large book collections. Varro, in fact, wrote a (lost) *De Bibliothecis* and was commissioned by Julius Caesar to establish Rome's first public library (Suet. *Iul.* 44), although Caesar's assassination scotched the plan.

Roman Literary Life Under the Principate

The advent of the Principate, with its concentration of supreme authority and wealth in the person of the emperor, naturally had an effect on the literary life of the city. Rich individual patrons and collectors continued to influence Roman literary life in the imperial period – Martial and Statius flattered the consul Stella (among others) in the first century CE, and Athenaeus his patron Larensis in the third – but as patrons of the arts and founders of libraries, Rome's emperors from Augustus onwards were without equal. Literary life flourished in imperial Rome, through the “silver Latin” of first- and second-century CE writers like Seneca, Lucan, Statius, Juvenal, Tacitus, the Plinies, and others, to the learned miscellany of Gellius and Athenaeus, and on into the later empire.

Rome was naturally a great center of Latin literature, but the city also attracted learned visitors, some of whom continued to write in their own languages, principally Greek (including historians from Polybius to Dio and the medical writer Galen) but also, for instance, Aramaic (Josephus). Rome was also a central point of transmission and exchange in an empire-wide literary network; Ovid in Tomis and Martial in Spain (Mart. 12 pr.) both wrote longingly of the city, and Galen sent copies of his own works from Rome to friends, colleagues, and public libraries across the Greek east (*Peri Alupias* 21).

Literacy, Books, and Cultural Competence

Estimates of literacy in the city vary and cannot be precise. Recent scholarship has focused not (only) on the question of how many people could read, but has explored the variety of possible literacies, and of the literary experiences open to those both with and without the capacity to read or write for themselves (Johnson and Parker 2009). Literary education at its highest levels was necessarily an expensive minority interest in the ancient world, and the learned, allusive nature of Classical literature tended to create “hierarchies of cultural competence” within Rome and between Rome and her provinces (Woolf 2003, 205–6), so that the ability to engage fully with written literature remained an élite pursuit and a marker of social status.

On the other hand, literary texts and graffiti finds from across the empire suggest that elements of at least a basic grounding were fairly widespread and that certain texts attained a high level of recognition and popularity. Virgil’s *Aeneid*, for example, became an instant schoolroom classic. Many excerpts, especially the opening lines, have been found scratched onto walls in Rome and elsewhere. Authors like Juvenal, Gellius, and Pliny suggest the existence of audiences for literary lectures, recitals, contests, and debates held in private houses and public spaces like theaters, libraries, porticoes, and bath-houses, creating a (deliberate) impression of a city full of expressions of a lively literary culture. Emperors sought to enhance Rome’s status as a cultural capital through the foundation of festivals incorporating literary contests, such as Domitian’s Capitoline Games. The popularity and importance of such events is attested by the touching tomb of the eleven-year-old Quintus Sulpicius Maximus, found near the Porta Salaria: his grieving parents, possibly freedmen proud of the education they had provided for their child, inscribed around his funerary portrait the entire text of the Greek epigram that had won the boy some distinction at the third Capitoline games of 94 CE (*CIL* 6.33976).

The growth of the commercial book market in imperial Rome meant that books were no longer solely the province of wealthy, dedicated collecting aristocrats, but were now within the reach of anyone who merely had money. Some of Horace’s and Martial’s poetry mentions particular booksellers or publishers and their locations within the city as if to advertise them; both Martial and Ovid seem to expect that poetry will circulate in cheap popular editions as well as or instead of luxury presentation volumes, and the elder Pliny claims to be writing for the “humble crowd of farmers and craftsmen” (Hor. *Epist.* 1.20; Mart. 1.2, 1.66, 1.117, 4.72, 13.3; Ov. *Tr.* 3.1.81–2; Plin. *HN* Pr. 6). Authors like Horace could affect to disdain the false allure of mass circulation but for others, like the despairing Ovid, it proved, in the end, to be a good route to posterity.

Books for sale attracted their share of unlearned collectors. Petronius’s boorish freedman millionaire Trimalchio impresses no-one with his books bought by the yard (*Satyricon* 48), and Lucian wrote an entire work called

“Against the Unlearned Book Collector.” There is an element here of the old guard resenting the spread of a habit once reserved to them alone, and we might take this, and the increasing number of booksellers, as an indication of the “democratization” of the book in imperial Rome: it seems that more people were reading and owning books than ever before.

In an age before copyright and royalties authors could not depend for their livelihood on the mass market. The ideal of the independently wealthy gentleman amateur, engaging in literary activity as an escape from the pressures of public life, continued to be a powerful conceit. The letters of the younger Pliny, for example, create an impression of an upper class *beau monde* in which the author and his peers (including Suetonius and Tacitus) read and commented on each other’s works and attended each other’s recitals in between their official duties, in Rome and at their country villas. But this impression is an idealized one, part of Pliny’s attempt to negotiate the proper function of the senatorial élite under the Principate. In fact, it was also the case from the earliest age of Roman literature that many authors had depended for advancement and income on patrons of higher social and economic status – a relationship based on difference, not equality of esteem. An influential patron could be an author’s means to bring his work to a larger audience through recitations, book copying, and distribution (which might loosely be termed ‘publication’), as on occasion could commercial booksellers.

Roman Libraries

Rome’s imperial libraries and those of the provinces played their part in this complicated landscape of authors, audiences, and interests. Accession to a library was desirable to authors in several ways, as the passage of Ovid with which we opened shows, and library collections contributed to the book-centered intellectual life of the city. Created by and largely for men of means and power, they were not public libraries in the modern civic or philanthropic sense; we cannot be sure who was allowed to enter them, and there was little notion that they would contribute to education or moral improvement of the populace at large, even if that were thought to be desirable (though one might cite Aphthonius *Prog.* 12.48 to show that the idea at least existed in the Classical world). At the same time, however, they were part of the Roman imperial provision of cultural resources to the whole city, and at Rome and elsewhere they were housed in large, conspicuous, elegantly appointed buildings set in prominent public locations. They formed part of the emperors’ display of cultural engagement and generosity, attended (as is discussed below) by a rhetoric of public provision and imitated in the provinces by men like Pliny at Comum and Celsus at Ephesus. As well as providing unparalleled resources of high-quality books to readers, they acted as

architectural displays of the social and political importance of literature, visible to people of many statuses and interests. Display of this sort required an interested audience; libraries were one of many available choices in the euergetic repertoire and, like a bath-house or a theater, required an appreciative constituency to make the gesture worthwhile (Nicholls 2013).

Rome's first three public libraries were, as we have seen, all founded within a short period of about fifteen years at the advent of the Principate. The idea of the library was not original to Augustus. The Hellenistic royal libraries were doubtless one inspiration (Augustus, Strabo (17.1.8) tells us, took over the control of the Alexandrian Mouseion when he conquered Egypt), but others had already founded libraries in Rome, or tried to. Julius Caesar's appointment of Varro to found public libraries at Rome came to nothing after the Ides of March, but Varro's influence was uniquely honored by the display of his portrait bust in the first such library to be opened in the city, in Asinius Pollio's rebuilt Atrium Libertatis.

Gaius Asinius Pollio was an important figure in late Republican literary Rome, a tragedian, an Atticist orator, a poet and friend of poets, and an historian. His Atrium Libertatis library, funded by his triumph in 39 BCE, therefore suited his literary persona. It may also have been seen as a political gesture, situated as it was in a building that was a home of state archives and associated with the traditional liberty of the *populus Romanus*. It can be read as a response to the increasingly public, political role of literature in Rome that would reach its apogee in Augustus's golden age of Latin letters. This is reflected in the poetic image, spiced with irony, with which this chapter opened, of the goddess Liberty effectively censoring Latin literature by refusing to admit the exiled Ovid's book to the library housed in her hall once this library had come under imperial control a generation later.

Pollio's decision to make his library a public institution marks an important moment in literary history at Rome, paralleled in other forms of euergetism and enthusiastically embraced by Augustus, in which the elite resources formerly enjoyed by men like Lucullus and Cicero began to be deployed as public, civic benefactions. Seneca states that Pollio was also the first man in Rome to hold recitations of his own literary works before an invited audience, suggesting that he had recognized and was attempting to appeal to a new "market" for acts of cultural display in the city (*Controv.* 4 Pr. 2, though the claim is not wholly credible). The same was true, according to the elder Pliny, of Pollio's sculpture collection, which he put on display because he was "anxious for people to see it"; since at least some of this collection was deployed in the Atrium Libertatis complex, the same logic of public visibility might have applied to the library there (*HN* 36.33).

Augustus, who must have found himself in possession of vast artistic and cultural collections (including, quite possibly, the former libraries of Varro, Cicero, and Sulla), picked up and developed this trend, absorbing Pollio's

Atrium Libertatis into a nascent system of imperial libraries. His Palatine library was dedicated in 28 BCE, and that of the Porticus Octaviae a few years later. Each complex was closely associated with a temple or temples and a portico, and each included lavish provision of art works as well as Latin and Greek book collections. The Palatine library in particular became an important center of literary life, mentioned by authors over more than two centuries from Horace to Galen, and was also used on occasion by Augustus to hold meetings of the senate.

“Public” libraries?

These libraries were one element of a suite of previously aristocratic cultural and leisure resources which the new Principate and its successors aimed to provide on an unprecedented public scale: we might also think of bath-houses, pleasure-gardens, and art collections, as well as religious and secular civic architecture of every kind. The new regime’s attitude to Rome’s cultural patrimony amplified Pollio’s initiatives and was demonstrated by a speech made by Agrippa in 33 BCE “on the need to display works of art of every kind in public” (*de tabulis omnibus signisque publicandis* – Plin. *HN* 35.26).

The foundation of the new public libraries attracted similar language. Several passages use *publicare* or cognates in their discussion of these libraries, or refer to public access to their collections (Suet. *Iul.* 44; Isid. *Origines* 6.5.2; Plin. *HN* 7.115, 35.10; cf. Ov. *Tr.* 3.1.63–4). This Augustan-era attitude seems to have informed the Roman historical understanding of what libraries were for, so that Vitruvius (*De Arch.* 7 Pr. 4) anachronistically attributes the foundation of the royal library in Hellenistic Pergamum to “public pleasure.”

Of course we cannot know how “public” in the modern sense these libraries were. On the one hand they were described as above in terms that suggest – though the precise nuance is hard to pin down – that they had a public identity distinct from the private collections of an earlier age, playing a new part in the literary life of the city and empire and located in highly visible public complexes; what we know of their architecture also suggests the capacity for large numbers of visitors. On the other hand, books were precious objects that needed guarding, literacy was a minority capability in any ancient city, and the evidence for access arrangements and entitlements to these libraries is very exiguous indeed.

Later Libraries at Rome

Augustus’s successors (at least up until Hadrian) adopted and expanded the

city's public library resources. These imperial public libraries eventually covered multiple sites, occupying some of the most prestigious monumental complexes in Rome (none seems to have been a stand-alone structure) and requiring the attentions of their own procuratorial administrator and staff, many of whose epitaphs we have (Houston 2002). The Regionary Catalogues state that there were 28 libraries in the City of Rome by the early fourth century CE.

Tiberius founded a library in the Temple of Deified Augustus whose exact location is now unclear, apparently restored by Trajan in the early second century CE (Mart. 12.2.7–8). There was also a library in the Domus Tiberiana area of the Palatine hill. It is first attested by various authors in the mid-to-late second century CE and may date from well after the time of Tiberius himself. The next library-founding emperor was Vespasian, whose Templum Pacis of 75 CE is known to have contained a library from two references in Gellius (5.21.9, 16.8.2), and is described by Galen (*Libr. Prop.* 8.495K and 19.21K) as a great center of Roman intellectual life up until the fire of 192 CE. It was also very near the area where Rome's booksellers seem to have congregated. Recent excavations in the Templum Pacis have turned up a tiny ivory portrait bust of the Stoic philosopher Chrysippus, appropriate for a library. They have also ruled out the complex's large central hall as the library room; interest is now focusing on the large room with wall niches under the Church of SS. Cosmas and Damian, adjacent to the room in which the marble plan of Rome was displayed (Tucci 2013). Trajan also built libraries at the other end of the run of imperial fora, and these have conventionally been identified with the pair of brick-built halls flanking his famous column. Hadrian is said to have founded an "Athenaeum," an enigmatic focus of intellectual activity incorporating a library, presumably connected in some sense to the goddess Minerva and symbolic of Hadrian's deep attachment to Greek and especially Athenian culture.

Some specialism of collections may have developed over time to distinguish these libraries from each other. While Ovid's tour of the city's Augustan libraries suggests that all three might have held contemporary poetry, Vespasian's Templum Pacis library seems to have gathered a reputation for housing texts for advanced study in fields like grammar and medicine, while Trajan's forum's libraries housed *inter alia* state papers and archives. In general, though, these libraries seem to have had fairly catholic holdings and the regular supplementing of the city's library system suggests that they were intended to showcase the glittering cultural achievements of their founder emperor's reign in high-quality copies and then fill up, so that successors had to add libraries of their own elsewhere in the city.

Form and use of Libraries

The evidence for architectural form of these libraries is imperfect. None can be identified with absolute certainty, though there are certain traditional candidates. Scholarship on Roman libraries has for a while been dependent on a typology “generated,” as one recent article puts it, “more by centuries of wishful thinking than by any hard fact” (Claridge 2007, 78). This typology depends largely on firmly identified provincial libraries such as those of Ephesus and Timgad, and conjectures that their architecture of large halls with wall niches serving to accommodate wooden book cupboards and accessed by a continuous podium or stepped crepidoma was typical of all Roman libraries. On this basis a pair of niched Flavian apsidal halls on the Palatine is commonly identified as the Palatine library mentioned by so many literary sources (thus Iacopi and Tedoni 2005–6) and the similar twin brick-built halls flanking Trajan’s column as Trajan’s library (cf. Meneghini 2002 and Packer 2003). These halls can be reconstructed on the basis of surviving elements, as pictured in Figure 16.1, as large and magnificently appointed spaces revetted in high-quality marble from around the empire.



Figure 16.1 Library of Trajan, cutaway.

Provided by author.

Such buildings are consistent with the descriptions of libraries in the literary sources, as far as they go, but we should at least bear in mind that they could have served many other functions and that they are not all perfectly consistent

with use as libraries. New excavations such as those at the library in Nysa in Turkey (Strocka, Hoffman and Hiesel 2012) and at the Metro C site in Rome (Egidi 2010) continue to add to our ideas of what a Roman library and its associated spaces “should” look like.

We can say that the buildings in Rome at least resemble known provincial libraries; the elements they share in common with many other forms of Roman public building (grand halls with wall niches could serve many other purposes) make firm identification hard in the absence of definite evidence, but also mean that if these were libraries, then they were constructed to fit in with the city’s landscape of monumental building and display rather than to provide perfectly efficient storerooms for books and workspaces for readers.

We know that Rome’s public libraries accommodated recitals and oratorical events and meetings of the Senate, so we should certainly imagine large buildings incorporating open areas of floor space or stepped seating (as do the buildings named above). As well as their book rooms, some libraries formed part of a larger architecture of culture in complexes with large spaces appointed for public events. Galen (*Libr. Prop.* 19.21–22K) implies that the Templum Pacis, home of an important library, also contained more than one auditorium or lecture room. Late ancient sources suggest Hadrian’s Athenaeum at Rome incorporated meeting halls big enough to accommodate literary declamations and senate meetings (Sid. Apoll. *Ep.* 2.9.4; SHA *Pert.* 11.3; *Alex. Sev.* 35.2; *Gord.* 3.4; Cass. Dio 74.17). The Metro C site mentioned above contains a series of Hadrianic buildings in the vicinity of the northern end of Trajan’s forum, near the presumed location of that complex’s library (Claridge 2007, La Rocca 2009, Egidi 2010). The structures seem well-suited to house large debate, lecture or recitation events, with two opposed banks of seating veneered with marble similar to that of the nearby libraries. Hadrian’s library in Athens housed twin purpose-built lecture rooms with raked seating, and their arrangement may have resembled Vespasian’s Temple of Peace (where, as we have seen, there was a library). An inscription shows that at some point an auditorium was also constructed near the Celsus library at Ephesus (*IvE* 7.3009).

Artworks were commonplace in libraries, especially portraits of authors, and visitors may have come to see them as well as the books. Pliny tells us that the Domus Tiberiana library contained a statue of Apollo Temenitus that was 50 Roman feet tall (Plin. *HN* 34.43), implying again a very large library room. Such a prodigious piece was an attraction in its own right, though Apollo was of course a suitable god for a library, especially one in a temple complex dedicated to the deified Augustus.

Catalogues, Staff, Languages, access, and Bath-

House Libraries

The care taken by emperors to set established scholars in charge of their libraries indicates that the arrangement of their contents into useful collections was the object of considerable attention: these were not just showy treasure-houses of looted books, but institutions intended to have a working life. Roman literary sources and inscriptions corroborate this impression by suggesting the existence of catalogues (probably lists of books and authors rather than catalogues in the modern sense; Nicholls 2011a) and specialist staff (Houston 2002). Rome imported Greek library specialists along with its first great influxes of books, so good library practice would have been known in Rome by the age of the first imperial library foundations. Quintilian (*Inst.* 10.1.57) speaks of the *indicem ex bibliotheca* as if it were a commonplace item, and Galen in the late second century was characteristically delighted to have discovered what he thought were errors and omissions in a catalogue covering works in the Palatine library. Both Galen and his near contemporary Aulus Gellius seem to imply that they could browse for themselves among the holdings of Rome's libraries (Gal. *Peri Alupias*; Gell. 11.17.1). The evidence for numbered book-cases is rather less good, but does exist (SHA *Tac.* 8.1). Although literary and epigraphic sources describe Latin and Greek library collections in Augustan libraries, it is not necessarily the case that these were housed in separate rooms. The Augustan spirit of Latin emulation of Greek literary forms, and Augustus's absorption of large existing collections, meant that other dispositions of the libraries' contents, such as shelving by genre or keeping large collections together, were possible. Some later libraries seem to have been housed in twin chambers but others were monocalameral, and there is in fact no firm evidence for architectural division by language (Nicholls 2011b).

Whether or how entry to these buildings was controlled is a matter for speculation. Some degree of access control seems likely to preserve the valuable contents, and Ovid's portrayal of his books' exclusion from the Augustan libraries, and Marcus Aurelius's reference to a custodian (Fronto, *ad Aurelium* 4.5), suggest the presence of porters or door staff of some sort; the epigraphic record names *vilici* of public libraries (e.g. *CIL* 6.2347, 4435, 8679, 8744; 14.196). At Ephesus the closing of the Celsus library's door has worn deep grooves into the marble threshold. On the other hand, the monumental architecture of surviving public libraries and the location of several libraries in prominent imperial monuments, busy streets or public baths, in buildings with large, conspicuous openings at ground floor level, seem to indicate that they were also intended to be accessible or at least visible to a numerous population of mixed socioeconomic status. A well-known inscription from a Trajanic-era library in Athens (*SEG* 21.500) sternly prohibits the borrowing of books, though Fronto's letter to Marcus Aurelius and a passage of Gellius (19.5.4) imply that well-connected library visitors, at

least, could persuade custodians to let them take works out, perhaps through the offer of a judicious bribe.

It has often been suggested that there were libraries in Rome's great imperial bath-houses, which would certainly increase the public prominence of libraries and presumably their usership. This would certainly fit with the extensive cultural and artistic resources housed in these huge complexes. The evidence, however, is poor; there is one inscription that seems to claim the existence of a bath-house library (*CIL* 6.8679) and a single direct attestation in a late source of dubious reliability naming a library in Diocletian's baths (*SHA Prob.* 2.1). The archaeological evidence is not conclusive and depends on the same optimistic typological rationale discussed above. The large halls often identified as libraries in these baths and those of Trajan and Caracalla are not wholly suited for the purpose, being gigantic and too widely spaced apart from each other around the bath-house perimeter wall to admit of a unified library function. On the other hand, we know that literary recitals and debates happened in the baths and there are inscriptions (rarely cited in discussions of this subject) that show that Trajan's baths had some sort of storage for documents including books, making a library at least distinctly possible (*CIG* 3.5906–5907; *CIL* 3.12336).

Libraries and literary life in Rome

Bath-house libraries aside, there was by the time of Hadrian a concentration of library buildings in the center of the city, clustering around the Palatine Hill and at either end of the suite of imperial fora to the north-east. The city's commercial booksellers seem to have congregated in this area too, suggesting that the area had become a focus of literary activity. The Vicus Sandaliarius to the north-east of the Templum Pacis was the center of the book trade by the mid-late second century CE (perhaps partly displacing the shoe-making for which it was named; see also Holleran, [Chapter 22](#) in this volume and Nicholls 2011a) and a place where enough intellectuals were coming and going to engender impromptu literary gatherings and disputes in the street outside the bookshops, where books were prominently displayed (Gal. *Libr. Prop.* 19.8K; Gell. *NA* 18.4.1). A century earlier the adjacent area, including the Argiletum, was mentioned three times by Martial as a place where his own books were for sale (1.2, 1.3, 1.117). The booksellers were perhaps attracted by the presence of likely bibliophilic customers in these streets, which led down into the imperial fora and thence across the Via Sacra to the Roman Forum and Palatine. The reliable manuscripts in the nearby libraries may also have been attractive to commercial booksellers wanting to ensure or

demonstrate the reliability of their stock, given the suspicion that often attached to commercial book copies, and probably influenced Galen in his choice of a storage room in a nearby warehouse for his own books and working notes.

The overall effect was that in imperial Rome, spaces like the *Templum Pacis* became a “general meeting place for all those engaged in learned disputes” (Gal. *Libr. Prop.* 19.21K). The provision of large public libraries with unique holdings of rare books and accommodation for debates and lectures in their own spacious halls or adjacent buildings had created a new literary landscape, drawing in scholars and causing a knock-on effect in the area’s commercial life, whether for storage space or books (Nicholls 2011a).

It seems that these libraries became especially important to Roman authors and scholars as places to find and read reliable texts. This function emerges most clearly in the newly discovered *Peri Alupias* of Galen in which he mourns the irretrievable loss in the fire of 192 CE of the Palatine library’s unique collection of old manuscripts which he had used to determine the authenticity of various attributions (Jones 2009; Nicholls 2011a).

The libraries were attractive to authors as well as readers. They offered the apparent guarantee of preservation in high-status copies within high-status buildings, in the company of great authors of the past and with implied imperial approval. These institutions, like elite private collectors, could command specialist staffs to mend and copy expensive, high-quality copies of their books, ensuring long-term survival. All this was attractive to authors hoping to create a *monumentum aere perennius* and reach future generations of readers.

In Rome this gave the libraries’ imperial patrons, who determined who was honored with books and portraits and who was shut out, a degree of power over the city’s writers. Horace, as we have seen, speaks about the possibility of writing for and reading in Augustus’s libraries, and Ovid and Martial (5.5) both wrote sycophantic poems longing for accession onto the Palatine shelves. Comments made by and about Josephus, to take another example, suggest that the support offered to him by the Flavian emperors included the acceptance of his books into Rome’s libraries, and the placing there of his statue (Joseph. *Vit.* 363; cf. Euseb. *Hist. eccl.* 3.9.2; Jer. *De vir. ill.* 13.1). When Tiberius placed busts of his own rather eclectic choice of favorite poets (Euphoriion, Rhianus, and Parthenius) in the libraries at Rome, scholars immediately began writing commentaries on them, an indication that the libraries were indeed an influence on the literary life of Rome (Suet. *Tib.* 70).

Conversely, imperial displeasure could also be exercised through attitudes to libraries and books. Episodes range from the cold (Ovid’s exclusion under Augustus) to the sinister (Tiberius’s famous burning of the books of the condemned historian Cremutius Cordus, later readmitted to the city’s libraries:

Tac. *Ann.* 4.34; Cass. Dio 57.24.2–4; Sen. *Dial.* 6 (= *Cons. Marc.*) 1.3; Suet. *Calig.* 16) to the simply mad, as when Gaius, in a moment of characteristic caprice, tried to remove Virgil and Livy from Rome’s public libraries (Suet. *Calig.* 34.2).

In summary, the fact that several emperors chose to erect or restore public libraries in Rome and involve themselves with their running suggests that these libraries formed an important part of the literary life of the city. While the number of regular readers was probably never large in absolute terms, we can see that the libraries did have an impact on literary production and consumption in Rome and also acted as visible symbols of the importance of literature to the city’s rulers. The enthusiastic imitation of imperial library foundations in the provinces suggests that for a while, especially in the early second century CE, libraries were seen as an important element in metropolitan cultural euergetism and a way of asserting membership of, and connecting to, a fashionable literary aristocracy.

Rome’s literary culture and libraries thrived throughout the high empire, especially during her acme of prosperity in the first two centuries CE. Gellius and Fronto used the city’s libraries in the mid second century CE; Galen tells us that late-Republican book collections were on the shelves of the Palatine library up until the fire of 192 CE, states that the Templum Pacis was a major intellectual center until the same date, and implies that the Domus Tiberiana library was still functional though badly compromised by theft and damp. Julius Africanus makes a brief reference to a library at the Pantheon in the third century CE; a fourth-century inscription seems to associate a *sc(ri)ba grammaticus* called Bonifatius with a Trajanic library (*CIL* 6.9446 = 33808); and as late as the fifth century CE Claudian and Sidonius Apollinaris boasted of a statue standing in or between the two libraries of Trajan’s forum (Claud. *De Bello Gothico* Pr.7–8; Sid. Apoll. *Ep.* 9.16 vv 25–28). In Claudian’s case the inscribed base survives, stating that the statue was erected at the behest of the emperors Arcadius and Honorius because of their confidence in their own judgment of the poet’s worth, by this date a self-conscious gesture to earlier ages of imperial literary and library patronage (*CIL* 6.1710).

High-level literary culture is a societal luxury, however, vulnerable like others to the vicissitudes of change and decline. By 378 CE Ammianus Marcellinus (14.6.18) was lamenting Rome’s “libraries perpetually shut up like tombs.” By then the baton of learning and book collecting was passing from the pagans of classical antiquity to the Christians, as the classical papyrus scroll gradually gave way to the Christian parchment codex and new literary forms and preoccupations emerged.

Appendix: Sources for Rome’s Public Libraries

Library of the Atrium Libertatis: Attested by Ov. *Tr.* 3.1.71–2; Pliny *HN* 7.115, 35.10; Isid. *Etym.* 6.5.1.

Library of Palatine Apollo: Attested by Ov. *Tr.* 3.1.63–4; Hor. *Ep.* 1.3.17 with scholion, 2.1.214–18; Serv. *Georgics* 4.10; Suet. *Aug.* 29.3; Cass. Dio 53.1.3; Fronto *Ep.* 4.5; Tac. *Ann.* 2.37, 2.83 with *Tabula Hebana* line X; Galen *Peri Alupias* 12ff. see *LTUR* 1.54–7 s.v. Apollo Palatinus. Its numerous images: Hor. *Ep.* 2.1.214–18; Porph. *Hor. Epist.* 2.1.214; *Schol. Hor. Sat.* 1.4.21; Tac. *Ann.* 2.37, 83. Its librarians: Pompeius Macer (Suet. *Iul.* 56.7; *PIR* P.472) and C. Iulius Hyginus (Suet. *Gram et rhet.* 20; *PIR* I.357). Poetic readings and auditions here: *Schol. Hor. Sat.* 1.10.38; Calp. *Ecl.* 4.157–9. A lost fragment 20b of the Marble Plan (q.v.) showing twin apsidal chambers is conventionally identified as this library (Carettoni *et al.* 1960, pl. XXII; cf Iacopi Tedone 2005–6 for the excavation of the site).

Libraries of the Porticus Octaviae: Ov. *Tr.* 3.1.69–70; Plut. *Marc.* 30.11; Cass. Dio 49.43.8. Funerary inscriptions name the librarians, the first of whom was C. Melissus, a freedman of Maecenas (*PIR* M.38; Suet. *Gram et rhet.* 21.3); *CIL* 6.2347–9, 4431–5, 5192. Cassius Dio 66.24 includes this library among his list of buildings burned in the fire of 80 CE, so perhaps it was among the libraries restored *impensissime* by Domitian (Suet. *Dom.* 20).

Library of the Temple of the Deified Augustus (Templum Novum): artworks there: Suet. *Tib.* 74; Pliny *HN* 34.43 and possibly *HN* 35.131. Reconstruction after fire probably attested by Martial 12.3.7–8. The remains of the Flavian building incorporated into the church of S. Maria Antiqua have been identified over the years as this library (but also that of the Domus Tiberiana and as the Athenaeum).

Library of the Domus Tiberiana: Attested by four ancient authors who claim to have used it: Fronto *Ep.* 4.5; Gell. *NA* 13.20.1; Galen *Peri Alupias* 18 in the mid to late second century CE; and Flavius Vopiscus at the time of Maxentius (*SHA Prob.* 2.1).

Library of the Temple of Peace: Aulus Gellius cites obscure grammatical treatises there: *NA* 16.8.2, 5.21.9. Galen *Peri Alupias* 18 mentions “repositories” at the Templum Pacis which may in the context be either libraries or storage buildings; elsewhere (K8.495, 19.21) he discusses the Templum Pacis as a venue for literary and scholarly activity. Eusebius *Hist. Eccl.* 3.9.2 and Jerome *De vir. ill.* 13.1 may well refer to this library when they say that the Flavian emperors favored Josephus with the inclusion of his books and statue in Rome’s libraries.

Libraries of Trajan: Referred to as *Bibliotheca Ulpia*: SHA *Tac.* 8.1, *Prob.* 2.1, *Car.* 11.3; *Ulpia Bibliotheca*: SHA *Aurel.* 1.7, 1.10; 8.1; 24.7; *Bibliotheca Templi Traiani*: Gell. *NA* 11.17.1; βιβλιων α&c.comab; ποθήκας Cass. Dio

68.16.3; Sid. Apoll. *Ep.* 9.16.–25.8; *Proc[uratori] bibliothecarum divi Traiani* – *CIL* 14.5352. For the libraries' contents: *libri lintei*, SHA *Aurel.* 1.7; *Libri elephantini*, SHA *Tac.* 8.1; *Edicta...praetorum*, Gell. *NA* 11.17.1. The usual caveats apply to the use of the *SHA* as historical evidence. Three buildings excavated to the west of Trajan's Column in 2008–10 have been tentatively identified as these libraries.

A Capitoline Library: Orosius 7.16.3: *fulmine Capitolium ictum ex quo facta inflammatio bibliothecam illam, maiorum cura studioque compositam, aedesque alias iuxta sitas rapaci turbine concremavit*. This may be a separate library, an archival building, or just possibly Pollio's Atrium Libertatis library, depending on where one sites it.

Library of the Athenaeum: Sid. Apoll. *Ep.* 2.9.4.

Library of the Pantheon: mentioned only in a papyrus of the third century CE (p. Oxy. 3.412, 65ss.), a fragment of the *Kestoi* of Sextus Iulius Africanus, a catalogue of works of art kept at Rome.

Guide to Further Reading

The leading work on ancient literacy is still William Harris's book *Ancient Literacy* (Harris 1991), which concentrates on the particular question of how many people in antiquity could read and write. More recent work has adopted new approaches, seeking to broaden the question of what different types of literacy could be found embedded in ancient societies such as Rome's. The essays collected in Johnson and Parker 2009 provide a good survey.

On the role of the book in Roman literature and life, the foundations of modern scholarship were laid by Birt 1892, though its model of "publication" now seems anachronistic to, for example, Winsbury 2009. Reynolds and Wilson's *Scribes and Scholars* (third edition 1991) remains a classic account of the transmission of classical literature.

The bibliography on Roman libraries is extensive though there is as yet no definitive recent English monograph on the subject. Studies range from the architectural (Makiowieca 1978; use with caution) to Yun Lee Too's more abstract recent consideration of what the idea of the library meant in the ancient world (Too 2010). Casson 2002 gives a short but reliable and very readable overview of libraries in the entire ancient world. König, Oikonomopoulou and Woolf 2013 contains a range of essays on libraries in the Greek and Roman worlds (and elsewhere) which amplify and extend Casson's short survey. See also now Houston 2014. The best compact survey of the evidence for imperial public libraries in Rome is Dix and Houston, 2006. For

the epigraphic evidence for staffing see Houston 2002.

There are new developments: the libraries of Trajan's forum have been drawn into the debate over the northern end of that complex (see e.g. Meneghini 2002 and Packer 2003; see also Claridge 2007 and Egidi 2010 on the new excavations mentioned above). Most spectacularly, the recent rediscovery of a text by the second-century medical author Galen has added a wealth of new information on Rome's libraries. The manuscript of the text is still being worked on (for a French translation and commentary, see Boudon-Millot, Jouanna and Pietrobelli 2010; for an English translation, see Singer 2014); scholars have begun to extract valuable information on Roman topography, library collections, and scholarly reading (Jones 2009; Nicholls 2011a) and book forms (Nicholls 2010).

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PART VI

DYING IN ROME

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Hazards of Life in Ancient Rome: Floods, Fires, Famines, Footpads, Filth, and Fevers

Gregory S. Aldrete

Introduction

The glories of ancient Rome, its creative, awe-inspiring works of architecture and its lavish spectacles and public entertainments, are well documented, but there was a darker side to life in the city as well. Rome was, quite simply, a crowded, noisy, smelly, and dangerous place to live. Its people were subject to all the standard ills found in any big city, as well as a few others particular to it. While wealth and privilege could partially shelter Rome's elite from some of these perils, others affected all of those who dwelled in the city, rich and poor. Among the more significant and omnipresent of the sundry hazards endured by Rome's inhabitants were six which might be characterized as the six F's: floods, fires, famines, footpads, filth, and fevers.

Floods

The cluster of mud huts that formed the earliest version of the city of Rome obviously arose where it did in order to lay claim to the natural ford across the Tiber river, just below Tiber Island. In addition to controlling one of the key communication nodes in central Italy, this spot had many other advantages, but the decision to settle on this location also condemned the city to a 3,000-year struggle against flooding that was not resolved until the construction of the modern embankment system at the turn of the twentieth century. As it turns out, Rome was situated along the most flood-prone stretch of the Tiber river, and the natural topography of the site consisted of small hills interspersed with low-lying land, some of which transformed into seasonal wetlands during the rainy months (Ammerman 2013). Early in Roman history, for example, areas below the Aventine Hill were so wet that boats were sometimes necessary to move through them, and for part of the year, there was even a regular ferry service (Varro, *Ling.* 5.43–4; Prop. 4.9.5; Ov. *Fast.* 6.395–417; Plut. *Rom.* 5.5).

Given the extremely low-lying nature of much of the city, it is not surprising that any rise in the level of the Tiber resulted in flooding. Ancient literary sources confirm the city's vulnerability to inundation: there are 42 surviving accounts by 18 different authors of 33 different years in which there were serious floods between 414 BCE and 398 CE. By combining the information in these primary sources with archaeological and geographical data as well as with later records of Tiber flooding, it is possible to establish the basic characteristics of ancient Tiber floods in terms of seasonality, duration, frequency, magnitude, and extent (Aldrete 2007).

Seasonality: In the Tiber basin, summertime is the dry season and winter and spring are the rainy periods, and the level of the Tiber reflects these variations. Additionally, during the spring, the river is swollen with snowmelt from the Apennine mountains, so the record of Tiber floods exhibits a strong seasonality, with fully 75 % of inundations occurring between November and February.

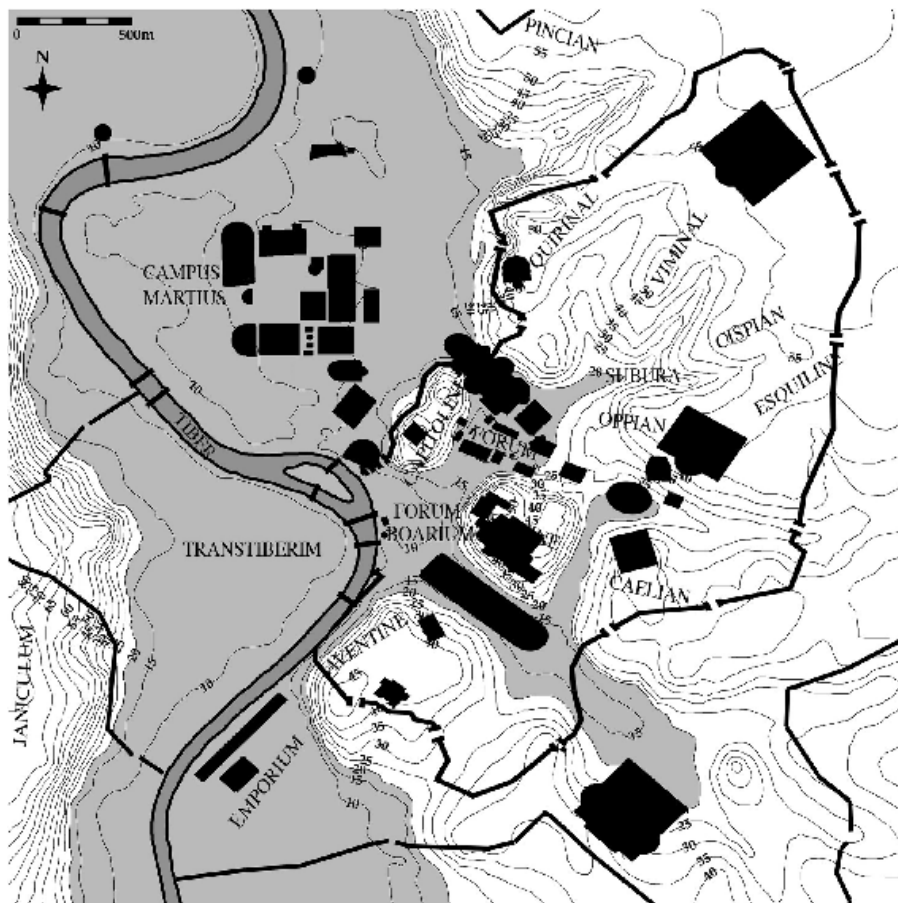
Duration: Tiber floods seem to fall into two categories: minor floods that lasted approximately three to five days, and major ones that persisted for about a week to ten days. For example, the Roman historian Cassius Dio describes a flood in 5 CE so severe that it was necessary to move about the city in boats for a week (55.22.3).

Frequency: The best-documented ancient and modern periods both suggest an average frequency of one severe flood roughly every twenty years, and a minor one every five years. Thus the average inhabitant of ancient Rome would likely have experienced several catastrophic floods during his or her lifetime, and numerous lesser ones.

Magnitude: The ordinary level of the Tiber river is between 5 and 7 meters above sea level; once it rises to a height of 10 meters above sea-level, the river is considered to be in flood. The highest recorded level of the post-classical era was 19.56 meters above sea-level during the flood of 1598. While ancient authors did not mention specific figures for how high the water reached, they did describe floodwaters extending to points almost two and a half kilometers from the banks of the Tiber. To have reached these areas, ancient floods had to have been at least as severe as the worst of the better-documented later ones. Therefore, ancient inundations achieved levels of at least 15 meters (50 feet) above the normal level of the Tiber.

Extent: In order to determine the extent of floods in ancient Rome, it is first necessary to recreate the ancient topography, which is substantially different from that of the modern city. Map 13 depicts the topographic contours of the city of Rome in the first century CE with an exceptional 20 meters above sea-level flood superimposed on it. As can be seen, such a flood would have affected much of the city, inundating nearly all the major political, commercial, and entertainment spaces and structures, including the Roman

Forum, the Circus Maximus, the valley of the Flavian Amphitheater, the Campus Martius, and the Emporium district, which were all located on the low ground.



Map 13 Topographic map of ancient Rome in the first century CE with shaded region illustrating the potential extent of floodwaters during a 20 meters above sea level flood. Numbers indicate elevations above sea level in meters. Black outlines identifying the locations of major public buildings are also shown, although some of these date to later centuries. (Gregory S. Aldrete).

These floods caused an array of harmful effects. Some of the immediate consequences would have been deaths and injuries to both humans and animals such as livestock, the collapse of buildings, the destruction of property, and the disruption of the social and economic life of the city. One common theme in ancient flood accounts is the interruption of public festivals by inundations, as when the flood of 12 CE caused the *Ludi Martiales* to be relocated from the low-lying Circus Maximus to the Forum of Augustus (Cass. Dio 56.27.4). Serious long-term effects of floods would have included

spoilage of food stocks, resulting in shortages or famine, and weakened and damaged structures. Most importantly, there would have been horrific outbreaks of diseases which would have continued for months after the flood itself had subsided, due to contact with the host of deadly pathogens typically carried in or deposited by floodwaters.

The wealthiest Romans overwhelmingly chose to locate their houses atop hills, which would have insulated them from many of the negative consequences of flooding. The poor, on the other hand, had to settle in the low-lying areas, and most of the buildings destroyed by floods appear to have been *insulae*, the often shoddily constructed apartment buildings in which ordinary Romans dwelt. Although nearly all the major public structures of the city were located in the flood zone, these edifices, often built atop high podia, and with their deep concrete foundations and waterproof brick and marble facing, would have been relatively immune to structural damage from inundation. The notable exception to this was large public baths, whose intricate networks of piping would have been uniquely vulnerable, and indeed, from the mid-first century onwards, all major public bath complexes were situated more than 20 meters above sea-level.

The Romans sporadically undertook a variety of measures to reduce the city's susceptibility to floods. There is archaeological evidence of the ground level of the central area of the Roman Forum having been deliberately raised 2–3 meters by dumping 10,000 cubic meters of fill into it as early as the sixth century BCE, and successive later projects continued this process. In the Campus Martius, a notoriously swampy region, a series of similar efforts during the first and second centuries CE substantially raised the ground levels there as well. Another strategy was to construct drains to carry away excess water, as exemplified by Rome's famous system of sewers, such as the Cloaca Maxima. The first version of this, which was constructed in the sixth century BCE, drained the Roman Forum, while a number of additional sewers drained other low-lying zones such as the Campus Martius and the valley of the Circus Maximus. The Romans' reluctance to undertake more dramatic anti-flood measures, such as diverting the Tiber or constructing levees or embankments, was likely due to a combination of practical factors (such as the fact that Rome's excellent aqueduct system meant that, even during the height of a flood, there was a readily available supply of fresh water) and psychological factors, including religious scruples about meddling with a river that was personified and revered as a deity.

Fires

While those fortunate enough to live on hills might have evaded floods, no one in Rome was safe from the ubiquitous and constant threat posed by fires.

A massive population crammed into highly flammable tenements, whose partition walls, furnishings, floors, and roofs were often made of wood, relied on dangerous open flames for all lighting, cooking, and heating, and all it took to ignite a fire was a stray spark. Because of the city's narrow, twisting streets and the lack of effective firefighting methods, minor fires could easily spread into major conflagrations that destroyed entire regions of the city.

According to literary and archaeological evidence, there were 85 fires in Rome between 390 BCE and 410 CE, but the sources tend only to record exceptional fires or those that affected major monuments (Rubin 2004). However, multiple fires were almost certainly a nightly occurrence in the city. Eighteen of the known fires were caused by deliberate acts of arson or vandalism during times of civil unrest and, given the tinderbox-like nature of the city, the charge of arsonist was a powerful label used by politicians such as Cicero to defame their enemies. The sources also frequently describe fires being started by lightning strikes, with temples, often located atop hills, as the most common target. Since lightning was closely associated with Jupiter, such events were typically regarded as divine portents. The most common cause of fires, however, would have been accidents. Rome consumed vast amounts of wood, much of which was burned for heating, cooking, or industrial purposes, and Horace speaks of the astonishing pall of smoke that perpetually hung over the city (*Carm.* 3.29.10–11). The overwhelming majority of the city's populace were apartment-dwellers who likely had to cook some of their meals over open fires or on improvised stoves, and the dark warrens in which they lived were lit only by small clay lamps that burned olive oil. In these crowded conditions, it was easy for a spark to jump to a combustible surface, or for someone to knock over a lamp and ignite a dangerous fire.

Once started, every fire had the potential to grow into an inferno. The thousands of apartment buildings, shops, and other structures that formed the urban matrix of Rome contained much highly flammable material, especially wood, that would have readily ignited and fed a growing fire. The poet Juvenal offers a vivid portrait of what must have been every tenant's nightmare – being caught on the upper floors of a burning apartment building: “smoke pours out, but you know nothing of it for if the alarm begins on the ground floor, the last man to burn will be he who lives [in the attic]” (3.199–202). Although from the first century CE onwards, Rome's monumental public structures were made primarily of materials such as concrete that were, in theory, at least fire-resistant, the roofing of these buildings tended to rely heavily on wood, making them vulnerable to conflagrations as well.

The way that the city was laid out also exacerbated the threat of fires. Because it had grown organically from a small village, by the second century BCE, Rome's streets were a jumbled maze of narrow, twisting paths that posed little or no barrier to the spread of fires. Even worse, many buildings had ramshackle wooden porches and additions which overhung the streets,

allowing the flames to leap from one structure to another. Under these conditions, once a fire had spread beyond its starting point, it was nearly impossible to extinguish.

During the Republic, fighting fires was predominantly a private concern, with neighbors banding together to do what they could to contain outbreaks. Some individuals, most famously Marcus Licinius Crassus, organized for-profit personal fire brigades, which enabled him to buy up much of Rome literally at fire-sale prices (Plut. *Crass.* 2.4), but it was not until the first emperor Augustus that the state took permanent steps to confront this menace. In 6 CE, Augustus established a contingent of roughly 7,000 men known as *vigiles* whose job was to patrol the streets at night and combat fires. They were divided into seven cohorts, each of which was provided with a station-house for storing equipment and was responsible for patrolling two of the fourteen regions of the city (Sablayrolles 1996). Later, each cohort also acquired barracks within its zone of responsibility. To extinguish fires, the *vigiles* mainly employed buckets, which could be filled at the nearest fountain. They also carried mats that could be used to smother flames, and each cohort had a crude pump device that sprayed out water under pressure. However, such methods would only have been useful when combating very small blazes, and much of the *vigiles*' effectiveness depended on quelling fires before they had grown. Against larger conflagrations, they had axes and hooks which were used to pull down buildings in order to create a fire-break. To assist with this task, each cohort was also equipped with a ballista, or catapult.

The worst fire to strike Rome broke out around the east end of the Circus Maximus on 18 July 64 CE. This terrible conflagration burned for nine days and, by the end of it, nearly the entire city was affected, with three of Rome's fourteen districts utterly destroyed and seven severely damaged (Tac. *Ann.* 15.38–44; Cass. Dio 62.16–18; Suet. *Nero* 38). Ancient sources report hundreds of homes and thousands of apartment buildings being incinerated by this blaze, and many monuments as well. In some areas, such as along the edge of the Esquiline Hill, the progress of the fire was halted only by demolishing huge swaths of buildings in order to create a fire-break, while in other regions, all efforts to stop the fire proved futile. In rebuilding the city after the Great Fire, Nero (and the emperors that followed him) dictated that major streets should be made broader and straighter in order to serve as fire-breaks, that more fire-resistant materials should be used in construction (especially of *insulae*), and that previously neglected height limits on buildings should be reimposed. These steps no doubt helped to curb future fires from spreading into giant conflagrations, but probably did little to stop the outbreak of localized fires.

Famines

As described in detail elsewhere in this volume (see Geraci, [Chapter 10](#)), by the first century CE, an enormous and complex food supply system had developed to feed Rome's teeming population of approximately one million inhabitants. This system included a vast physical infrastructure of ships, harbors, wharves, and warehouses, supervised by a sophisticated administrative organization of merchants and officials. In order to sustain the city's populace, a minimum of 400,000 metric tons of basic foodstuffs (grain, olive oil, and wine) had to be imported to Rome from overseas provinces during the summer sailing season, stored in warehouses, and then distributed throughout the year.

That this network managed successfully on the whole to feed the city for several centuries was an impressive achievement for a preindustrial society, but the system was a delicate one. Crop failures, natural disasters, war, piracy, mismanagement, and vagaries of weather could easily disrupt it, resulting in food shortages and, in severe cases, even famine. Between 200 BCE and 200 CE, there were at least 60 attested incidents of food shortage, many of which were so extreme that they provoked rioting in the streets (Garnsey 1988). The worst of these riots produced pitched battles in the streets, magistrates being stoned, rioters being slaughtered in large numbers, the senate being surrounded in the senate house and threatened with being burnt alive, and even the emperor himself being attacked (App. *B Civ.* 5.67–8; Asc. *Mil.* 48C; Cass. Dio 48.31; Suet. *Claud.* 18.2). Even the mere threat or rumor that there might be a shortage could spark hoarding and cause food prices to skyrocket. As usual, those most affected by high prices and scarcity were the poor, and due to a combination of unvaried diet and lack of sufficient calories, a substantial percentage of Rome's populace likely perennially suffered negative health effects from malnutrition.

Footpads

Despite the extraordinary sophistication of Rome's law code (see Bablitz, [Chapter 26](#) in this volume), the state was not much concerned with day-to-day crime. While the government took an active role in response to certain behaviors that were considered offenses against the state, such as treason, the vast majority of ordinary interpersonal crimes were largely left up to resolution by individual initiative. Like nearly all premodern cities, ancient Rome lacked a police force in the sense of a dedicated state-sponsored group whose purpose was to investigate crimes and to pursue and apprehend criminals. The closest that the state came to taking steps to suppress street crime was that the firefighting *vigiles* were also expected to keep an eye out

for criminals as they patrolled the city. While this would have helped to deter the commission of crimes in their immediate presence, it would have done little to reduce the overall crime rate.

Once night had fallen, Rome's streets were essentially a lawless zone, and to walk the streets after dark was literally to risk one's life. Under such circumstances, there was safety in numbers, and wealthy men who traveled the streets at night usually only did so accompanied by a retinue of bodyguards and brawny slaves bearing weapons and torches. Ordinary citizens had to take their chances, and anyone unfortunate enough to have to make his way home alone could easily have fallen prey to footpads who, at best, would merely have beaten and robbed him, but who all too often would have stabbed him, stripped his body of valuables, and rolled his corpse into the nearest sewer opening. To be out alone after dark was so questionable an activity that it seems that anyone who did so fell under suspicion of being either a criminal or a runaway slave. (On the fear of nocturnal muggers, see, for example, Prop. 3.16 and Juv. 3.270–305.)

Nor were you safe within your own home. Despite the presence of guard dogs and the widespread use of bars and locks on doors and windows (as attested by frequent references in literary sources as well as archaeological evidence), residents of houses and apartments in Rome lived in fear of thieves breaking in and robbing and killing them. In addition to private residences, these burglars also targeted shops and warehouses, and the night watchmen hired to protect these sites were often suspected of being in collusion with the robbers. (On burglars, see, for example, Mart. 5.42 and the *Digest of Roman Law* 1.15.3.1–2 and 47.18.1.)

During the day, other criminals prowled the crowded streets. These included pickpockets (*Dig.* 47.18.1) and cutpurses (*Dig.* 47.11.7), as well as hordes of generic thieves, beggars, and street urchins who would take any opportunity to make off with unwatched goods. One specialized type of thief frequented the public baths (*Dig.* 1.15.3.5). Upon entering a bath establishment, there was usually an anteroom where patrons undressed and deposited their clothes in niches or lockers. The bath thieves would cruise these rooms looking for unattended clothing to steal or to rifle through for valuables. Bath-houses would sometimes hire guards to patrol these rooms, but the only way to ensure that one's clothes would still be there after a bath was to bring one's own slave, whose job was to watch over his master's clothing.

Crime was especially rampant during major holidays when the city's populace gathered to watch public entertainments in venues such as the Circus Maximus. Not only did the dense crowds offer easy targets for pickpockets, but the deserted houses and apartment buildings tempted burglars to break in and loot them while their unfortunate inhabitants were obliviously enjoying themselves at the festivals. So common and troublesome did this practice become that, whenever the emperor Augustus sponsored a public spectacle, he

posted troops around the city to guard the empty dwellings of the populace (Suet. *Aug.* 43.1).

Filth

Rome's role as a "consumer city" has often been emphasized by scholars, and it is certainly true that prodigious quantities of goods such as grain, olive oil, wine, and water were imported to the city in order to sustain its populace. The converse of this equation, however, must also be kept in mind. Rome's immense population was an equally profligate producer, but its two main physical products were corpses and sewage. Every day, one million inhabitants would have generated something on the order of 45,000 kilograms of feces, 1.3 million liters of urine, and 135 corpses, the collective disposal of which would have posed a substantial challenge. This waste, combined with various other types of refuse and garbage produced by the city and coupled with the Romans' ignorance of the germ theory of disease, resulted in levels of hygiene and sanitation that, by modern standards, were truly appalling.

While the majority of Romans received some form of cremation or burial, it has been estimated that, each year, at least 1,500 corpses of beggars and other unfortunates ended up simply abandoned in the streets, where they rotted and were scavenged by animals (Bodel 2000; Hope 2000). While public officials may have periodically had these corpses hauled away, a number of literary anecdotes attest that decomposing bodies were a by no means uncommon sight. The gruesome image of a beggar dying in the streets while feebly attempting to fend off the scavenging vultures and dogs that were gathering to feed on him was so clichéd an image that the poet Martial composed a poem about it (10.5), and Suetonius recounts an incident when a street dog ran into the imperial palace and deposited a human hand that it was carrying beneath the emperor's dining table, not because such scenes were shocking or surprising, but only because the emperor interpreted this as a good omen since the hand was a symbol of power to the Romans (*Vesp.* 5.4). Adding to the bodies in the streets would have been thousands of carcasses from Rome's considerable population of animals, both domesticated and wild.

When considering the feces and urine produced by the city's human populace, one must remember that the primary purpose of Rome's sewers was to provide drainage rather than to carry away waste. While there were some public latrines, it is debatable how common it was for private structures to possess latrines and, for a number of practical reasons (not the least of which were smell and the potential invasion by vermin), one might not actually have desired a direct connection to the sewer within one's dwelling (Hobson 2009; Jansen, Koloski-Ostrow, and Moorman 2011). Especially in the high-rise apartments that contained much of the city's populace, the latrine may have

consisted of a clay pot in a corner that, when full, was in theory supposed to be lugged outside and down the street to the nearest sewer opening, where the contents could be poured in. While human waste was collected for purposes such as manure and laundering, in practice, many of these chamber pots seem to have been emptied by the much simpler expedient of surreptitiously dumping them out the window. Thus, at least a significant portion of Rome's sewage and garbage ended up in the streets. Despite laws aimed at curbing such behavior (e.g., *Dig.* 9.3.1), being struck by falling refuse was one of the common hazards of urban life, and such incidents are a staple in literature about the city (e.g., *Juv.* 3.268–78). When this practice is multiplied by the number of Rome's inhabitants and the sum total of human waste is augmented by the excreta of Rome's animals (including thousands of draft oxen, horses, and mules, as well as the city's feral dogs, birds, and rats), it is obvious that the total amount of raw sewage potentially being deposited in a relatively small area was quite substantial. In addition to excrement, this waste would have been increased by garbage of every kind, from animal bones to broken pots. It also appears that the operators of various animal processing industries at Rome, such as butchers and tanners, would, after slaughtering, disemboweling, and dismembering their animals (most often cows, sheep, and goats), have then dumped the unwanted by-products, including blood, viscera, entrails, bones, skin, and chemicals, directly into the streets (*Dig.* 43.10.1.5).

The biological waste deposited in the city's roadways was then trampled together with mud and refuse to form an unpleasant and malodorous layer of muck. Lubricating this process was the constantly running overflow of water from the thousands of streetside fountains and distribution basins. The continual flow nature of Rome's water supply system is sometimes credited with keeping the streets relatively clean by washing the deposited ordure into the sewers. Unfortunately, the volume of water overflowing from these basins was probably not strong enough to scour away the solid street waste except when accompanied by heavy rainfall, and thus merely served to keep it perpetually moist and gummy. In this context, it is worth noting Martial's characterization of the steps leading to the Subura district as being constantly wet and filthy (5.22), and Juvenal's description of the entire length of his legs becoming spattered with muck whenever he traversed the streets (3.247). This situation could also partially explain a number of features of Roman urban road construction, such as the high sidewalks and stepping stones for crossing intersections found in some cities (for example, Pompeii). It is probably not too much of an exaggeration to suggest that some of Rome's streets more closely resembled swampy bogs of sewage and refuse than what we would envision today as roadways.

Also contributing to the unsanitary atmosphere were large, open garbage pits located immediately outside the walls of the city during certain phases of its history. Their excavation has revealed that they contained an unsavory

mixture of human and animal carcasses, sewage, and general refuse. These pits would have swarmed with fossicking dogs, birds, rodents, insects, and, in all probability, human scavengers as well.

Fevers

As nauseating as the sanitary conditions in Rome might sound to a modern audience, it should be noted that this situation was entirely typical of all major western cities until the last few hundred years (although the circumstances in ancient Rome may have been somewhat more acute due to the scale and density of the city). It is possible that the Romans themselves, lacking our current understanding of the mechanism of disease transmission and the health hazards that such unsanitary practices posed, may not have been excessively troubled by the condition of their streets. From a modern scientific perspective, however, it is all too easy to see how the ancient city would have constituted a fertile breeding ground for a frightening array of harmful and fatal diseases (Scobie [1986](#); Scheidel [2003](#)).

The standard factors that affect the spread of most infectious diseases are the ease of transmission of the disease itself, the population density, the mobility of the populace, the general level of health of the populace, the availability of medical care, and the prevalent sanitary practices. Basic necessary sanitary practices include separation of the food supply from sources of contamination, avoidance of overcrowding, proper disposal of human waste (especially feces), and proper disposal of other wastes and garbage. As we have seen, nearly every one of these factors was present in a negative way in ancient Rome. In particular, the presence everywhere of carcasses and excrement, both human and animal, the scavenging dogs, birds, rats, flies, and other vermin, and the general overcrowding would have combined to foster diseases and rapidly spread them throughout the city.

The reason that it is so important to dispose of animal and human excrement properly is that it teems with a multitude of pathogens that, in turn, cause dozens of potentially fatal or debilitating diseases. One group of organisms commonly found in feces is viruses, including both enteric viruses, such as rotaviruses and parvoviruses, and dozens of different enteroviruses. The most ordinary result of these viruses are unpleasant, but not fatal, forms of gastroenteritis, producing fever, diarrhea, and nausea. Illustrating the ease with which these are spread is the fact that even today, despite modern sanitary practices, viral gastroenteritis is still the second most common disease in the United States. Other viruses can cause more serious life-threatening diseases. For example, hepatitis A can produce episodes of fever

and jaundice lasting for weeks, and untreated meningitis frequently results in blindness, brain damage, and death.

Another group of disease-causing organisms abundantly present in feces is bacteria. Among these are the well-known *Escherichia coli* bacterium, which causes the familiar “traveler’s diarrhea” form of gastroenteritis. Other widespread disease-causing bacteria include shigella, which produces dysentery, and salmonella, which causes salmonellosis. Closely related is the bacillus which causes typhoid fever, a dangerous disease that can produce high fever, diarrhea, malaise, organ damage, and internal bleeding. Finally, feces often contain harmful parasitic organisms such as protozoans and worms. Some of the most common of these protozoans are *Giardia lamblia* (which causes giardiasis), *Entamoeba histolytica* (which causes amebiasis), *Balantidium coli* (which causes balantidiasis), and *Cryptosporidium* (which causes cryptosporidiosis). Common parasitic worms found in humans are the nematodes, such as hookworms, threadworms, roundworms, pinworms, and whipworms, and the cestodes, which are various types of tapeworms. Although most worms are not fatal to their hosts, an infestation causes a variety of health problems. Occasionally death can result, as when roundworms agglutinate in sufficient quantity to block the bile duct, or form a fatal obstruction in the bowels.

In addition to exacerbating the sanitation problems, Rome’s domestic and feral animal population would have served as carriers of other deadly diseases spreadable to humans, such as rabies and leptospirosis, which is contracted through exposure to rat urine.

Damp conditions in perennially low-lying areas of Rome, or in the aftermath of a flood, would have offered ideal spawning grounds for other hazardous organisms. Various molds and fungi either produce or intensify allergies and respiratory ailments, especially among the young, old, and those suffering from other diseases. Some can be directly fatal, such as the *Stachybotrys atra* mold, which has been shown frequently to cause fatal pulmonary hemorrhage in infants in the aftermath of flooding. Moisture and standing water also encourage certain insects, such as mosquitoes, to breed and thrive, and these can carry a number of diseases deadly to humans, such as encephalitis. Most troublesome in ancient Rome was the *Anopheles* mosquito, the carrier of plasmodium parasites which, when transmitted to humans through the bite of the mosquito, cause malaria. Malaria seems to have been a major problem in ancient Rome, striking down a large percentage of the populace. While not intrinsically fatal, malaria subjects the sufferer to recurrent debilitating bouts of fever and, when coupled with other pre-existing illnesses, can easily prove fatal. In fact, studies of the seasonality of deaths in ancient Rome suggest a substantial peak in the death rate between August and October, which has been interpreted as corresponding to the malaria season (Shaw 1996; Sallares 2002).

While the generally successful operation of the grain supply system for Rome may have ensured a basic level of caloric intake for the city's denizens, the lack of nutritional variety in their diet would have made common a number of diseases caused by an unbalanced diet, such as scurvy, pellagra, beriberi, and rickets. Again, while these conditions are usually not fatal, they would have greatly weakened those afflicted, making them more vulnerable to death by the many other diseases rampant in ancient Rome.

While ancient texts combined with an understanding of epidemiology and the environmental and sanitary conditions present in ancient Rome make it possible to say with reasonable certainty that the diseases listed above would have been prevalent, archaeological evidence can augment and confirm this portrait. Examination of human skeletal remains from Pompeii and Ostia has revealed the presence of certain diseases, such as tuberculosis, which can leave physical traces on the bones of long-term sufferers. A poor level of oral health, as indicated by caries, abscesses, tooth loss, and heavy calculus deposits on the teeth and jaws of these skeletons, can be correlated with an increased incidence of infections and systemic health problems, including gastric and respiratory diseases (Bisel 2002; Lazer 2009).

All the health threats described thus far would have been more or less endemic in ancient Rome, meaning that they were constantly present, but the city was also prone to occasional, sporadic outbreaks of other infectious diseases such as the plague. When they affect a substantial percentage of the population, such outbreaks are labeled epidemics, and Rome suffered many of these, often resulting in large numbers of deaths in a short period of time. One example was an epidemic that swept through Rome one autumn during the reign of Nero, killing 30,000 people (Suet. *Nero* 39.1).

Finally, the Romans' habit of frequent bathing is sometimes cited as helping to ward off disease. While it is true that the availability of cheap or free public baths might well have kept the city's inhabitants relatively free of dirt, this probably did not contribute to their overall health. Unlike modern chlorinated pools, the Roman baths used no form of disinfectant, and a standard prescription offered by Roman doctors to their patients afflicted with a wide range of diseases (including boils, skin rashes, worm infestations, diarrhea, gonorrhea, and tuberculosis) was to take a long soak in the public baths, where the warm waters would often have provided a fine medium to transmit whatever they were suffering from to the other bathers (Celsus, *Med.* 3.22.1, 4.24.2, 4.25.2, 4.26.2, 4.28.1, 5.28.15).

Conclusion: The Fatal Metropolis?

While Roman historians may argue about the exact death rate in ancient Rome

(estimates vary from 40 to 80 per thousand per year during non-epidemic times), it seems fairly safe to say that the city was a generally unhealthy environment in which to live. The health hazards in Rome were particularly dangerous to the very old and the very young, and it is no surprise that rates of infant mortality were extremely high in the ancient world. Even the wealthiest could not escape this grim reality, as evidenced by the example of Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi brothers, who gave birth to twelve children, yet saw only three of them reach adulthood. Compared to an agricultural existence, life in ancient Rome would have been exciting and full of wonders, but it should not be forgotten that these urban thrills would have been accompanied by many unpleasant ordeals and outright dangers.

Guide to Further Reading

Useful general descriptions of negative aspects of living conditions in the city can be found in Aldrete 2009, Atkins and Osborne 2006, Whittaker 1993, Robinson 1992, and Ramage 1983. For an analysis of Tiber floods, their effects, and the Romans' response to them, see Aldrete 2007. On the Tiber river generally, see Le Gall 1953. In a succession of articles, Ammerman has done much to clarify the early topography of Rome (see his 2013 chapter for a summary). For an overview of fires in ancient Rome, the most complete treatment is an unpublished doctoral dissertation by L. Rubin 2004, while for information specifically on the *vigiles*, see Sablayrolles 1996 and Rainbird 1986. On food shortage and famine, see Garnsey 1988. On crime in the Roman world, see Harries 2007 and Bauman 1996. The classic description of the linked subjects of sanitation and disease in Rome is the 1986 article by Scobie, but in recent years these topics have been the focus of a number of innovative studies and scholarly debates. On disease generally, as well as its effects on population, see Scheidel 2003 and 1994, Shaw 1996, and chapters 2–4 in Storey 2006. Sallares 2002 focuses specifically on malaria. For an analysis of Roman health based on the examination of skeletal remains from Pompeii and Herculaneum, see Lazer 2009 and Bisel 2002. On the disposal of corpses, see Chapters 8–11 in Hope and Marshall 2000, and on toilets and aspects of sanitation and the disposal of waste, see Hobson 2009, Jansen, Koloski-Ostrow, and Moorman 2011, and the articles in Raventós and Remolà 2000. For a different (and more positive) perspective on sanitation in Rome from that presented in this chapter, see Lo Cascio 2006.

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CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Funerary Practice in the City of Rome

Valerie M. Hope

The Perfect Death

In 48 BCE Pompey the Great was killed in Egypt. More than 100 years later, the poet Lucan provided an evocative account of the demise of Pompey and the subsequent treatment of his body. Pompey was murdered, beheaded and his corpse left abandoned on a foreign shore. For Pompey there was no final embrace from his wife, no expensive pyre, and no elaborate procession. Instead, Pompey's body was hastily, and inadequately, cremated by a stranger. For Pompey there was no grand monument, but a reused mooring stone on which his name was scribbled. Lucan pours scorn on a Rome that could allow one of its great heroes to be so treated. The fate of Pompey, as told by Lucan, was a measure of the failings of Roman society, an indication of moral corruption (Lucan 8.604–872).

Roman death could be dramatic, even theatrical, or at least this was the impression often forged in literary sources, such as Lucan. Death was life's final challenge, and thus how it was faced was important. People were interested in how people died and the more drama and bravery (or the lack of it) the better. A stirring death scene was a common motif in literature and books existed which were collections of famous deaths (Plin. *Ep.* 5.5, 8.12). The "actors" – the dying person, the soon-to-be bereaved, and perhaps a murderer, assassin or combatant – all had their roles to play, actions to perform and words to utter. The scene could present an array of human emotions – fear, anxiety, anger, bravery, despair, hatred, love, or devotion. Death was the perfect opportunity for an author to expose the real nitty-gritty of human character; how death was met, and the rituals that followed, provided the final word on or summation of a life. In such literary constructs the good often died well and the bad badly, but there were also great people who faced awful deaths, bad people who surprised all by dying with courage (Edwards 2007; Erasmo 2008; Hope 2009, 50–64). Valerius Maximus summed it up as "the greatest importance is attached to how a life begins and how it ends" (9.12). From the perspective of a reader of the twenty-first century all this may seem a touch macabre, but it needs to be viewed in the context of a society where mortality was high and pain and suffering all too real. Also the elite – at whom much of this literature was directed – may have been very aware of the vicissitudes of fortune, that they could fall from favor

and suffer an unpleasant demise. The ideal was to show courage and calmness in crisis and command respect in life and in death. Indeed, this applied to those who surrounded the dying, as much as to the dying person. The whole death process reflected on the survivors; death was a time of potential crisis for the living – emotionally, economically and politically – and how families, friends and even enemies reacted, how they expressed grief or how they commemorated the dead were part of how they were assessed by others. Whether one was dying, watching someone die, whether a corpse or a mourner, how one was treated or behaved could contribute to one's own (and that of others), reputation and public profile.

Ancient authors realized the potential of death, and funerary practices, to reveal something meaningful about life. Similarly the evidence for Roman death, funerals, and burial has become a major influence in the study of Roman society. Death rituals, whether at the deathbed, funeral, or annual commemorative rites, were important in Rome because death was a real and present danger and because the dead had presence. Death had the potential to bring change, crisis, and turmoil to individuals, families, and the state. In the face of this, funerary practice brought security, stability, and continuity. In addition, the dead mattered: they were to be honored, tended, and remembered. The faces and names of the dead were inscribed into the fabric of the city: statues, inscriptions, buildings, and tombs declared their presence among the living. Rome was a city very aware of its heritage, and the past was often used or manipulated to justify the present (Zanker 1988; Favro 1996; Gowing 2005; Thomas 2007, 165–204; Wallace-Hadrill 2008a, 213–58). As part of that past, the dead had a claim on the collective conscience and were perceived as having continuing force. Funerary ritual had significance because it guided the dead from this world to the next, acknowledging their importance to, but also separation from, the living; the rituals also reintegrated the survivors and served to unite society by demonstrating its common beliefs and core values. Simultaneously, funerals could underline the fundamental differences in society, and roles and expectations based on factors such as status, wealth, age, and gender. Thus to understand how the dying were treated, and the dead disposed of and subsequently commemorated, has the potential to provide fundamental insights into Roman society.

Accessing Roman funerary practices, however, is not always a straightforward process. Lucan's account of Pompey's disposal effectively played with transgressions of norms, with the fact that Pompey was denied the end, funeral, and burial that he deserved. It is an irony that some of our most fundamental insights into the rituals come from similar literary scenarios – accounts of people being denied proper burial or imagining that they would be (e.g. *Ov. Tr.* 3.3.37–46; *Tib.* 1.3). From these negative accounts we are left to create a positive imprint of the essential rituals. To be sure there is other evidence – literary, epigraphic, and archaeological – to utilize, but this also

highlights the fact that building a picture of Roman rituals is problematic; it is an assembly job that lacks any real sense of chronological and geographic specificity. Nagging questions emerge. How reliable is literary evidence that so often prioritizes morality, drama and the inversion of norms? How representative is the other available evidence (for example, the few pictorial depictions of funeral processions and deathbeds)? What do excavated graves, including grave-goods, reveal about the actions and rituals that created them? In focusing on Rome how should we treat evidence from elsewhere in the empire? Did the essential rituals change with time or did they become anachronistic conventions? And to what extent can we access non-elite perspectives and the full range of experiences? The bereaved, close family, adults, children, men, women, undertakers, and hired mourners may have told related, but different, accounts of any given funeral.

In the next section these questions and doubts are put on hold and an account given of the processes and rituals that followed death and conveyed the body to its final resting place. I emphasize that this is a construction, a composite story assembled from a multitude of pieces. Such an account may be viewed as a fiction, since it cannot be claimed that this was how Roman funerals were, at all times, and for all social groups, but it does serve to identify the basic rites and expectations, while providing a useful backdrop for some subsequent observations on status, gender, tradition, and transition.

From the Deathbed to the Grave

Loved ones surrounded the bed of a dying person in order to hear any last words, commands, and wishes. Friends, family, doctors, and slaves could all be present (Van Hooff 2004; Noy 2011). At the moment of death, a close relative gave a final kiss to catch the last breath thought to hold the departing soul (e.g. Val. Max. 7.1.1). The eyes of the dead person were then closed and their name called aloud (*conclamatio*) (e.g. Sen. *Tranq.* 11.7). The body may have been moved, at or just before the moment of death, and placed on the ground (Artem.1.113). The body was then washed in warm water, anointed, and could be garlanded with flowers. A coin was sometimes placed in the mouth, a symbolic fare for Charon, the underworld ferryman (Stevens 1991). A death mask of the deceased may have been made at this time for use in the production of future portraits (Drerup 1980; Noy 2011). The jaws could be bound and the body was then dressed, in its best clothes if possible (e.g. Lucian, *On Mourning* 11–12); the poet Juvenal (3.171) commented wryly that people only wore their togas when they were dead. The appearance of the dead contrasted with that of the bereaved, who wore dark clothing, might dirty their hair with ashes, pull at or even cut their hair, beat their breasts and scratch their cheeks (e.g. Lucian, *On Mourning* 12).¹

The body was placed on a funeral couch (*lectus funebris*), and displayed in the atrium of the house with feet towards the door, surrounded by flowers and burning incense (e.g. Pers. 3.98–106). Hired mourners could be employed to complement and support the family mourners, shouting and wailing, and singing dirges and laments in praise of the deceased. While the corpse was being displayed, the funeral would have been organized. The death could be publicized by word of mouth, letters, heralds, and painted advertisements (Varro *Ling.* 7.42; *CIL* 4.9116). The amount of time between the death and the funeral may often have been, of necessity, short. The Romans were familiar with embalming (and mummification) through contact with Egypt and the Greek east, but these practices were not extensively adopted (Counts 1996).

The body was carried from the home to the grave or site of cremation. For the élite, the body may have been taken initially to the Forum for the delivery of a eulogy (*laudatio funebris*; Kierdorf 1980), exploiting the symbolic associations of the buildings and spaces of both the route and the Forum (Favro and Johanson 2010). Most bodies, however, were probably taken directly for disposal. Cemeteries were located outside of the walls of Rome, so this journey could be a lengthy one. The procession (*pompa*) could consist of the bier, musicians, mourners, family, and friends. Torches may have accompanied the procession, lighting the way and helping to clear the streets (Rose 1923). The bier, which could be decorated and draped with cloth, was carried by bearers, while some of the mourners, including hired mourners, made dramatic gestures, and sang or chanted laments accompanied by musical instruments (e.g. Plin. *HN* 10.121, and Noy 2000, 39–40). During the Republic and early imperial period, the processions of the office-holding élite were rendered more of a spectacle by the parade of the *imagines*. These were masks, representing the facial features of the ancestors of the deceased, which could be worn by actors. The deceased himself might even be brought back to life by an actor or relative wearing his mask (Polyb. 6.53–4; Flower 1996; Pollini 2007).

Disposal was the climax of the funeral. Bodies were either burned (cremated) or buried (inhumed). The inhumation of bodies was in vogue during the early to mid Republic; then cremation became the dominant rite, until inhumation came back into fashion during the second century CE (Nock 1932; Morris 1992). The most basic requirement for disposal was that the body should be covered with earth, and even a few handfuls of dust in a symbolic gesture could suffice to make the place of burial religious and thus protected (e.g. Hor. *Carm.* 1.28.10–16). Burial of the body in the earth may have retained its symbolic significance even when cremation was practiced, since in the act of *os resectum*, a bone from the corpse was severed and buried prior to cremation (Graham 2011a).

What happened when the grave or pyre was reached remains uncertain. A

speech may have been delivered at the graveside. Other rituals may have been performed, including animal sacrifice and the distribution of food, although the exact timings are unclear. Cicero noted that a sacrifice of a sow to the goddess Ceres (*porca praesentanea*) took place at the grave and it was this act that made the grave legally a grave (*Leg.* 2.22.55). It is likely that the sacrifice occurred at the beginning of the disposal ritual, with the sacrificial meat being divided between the dead, the bereaved and Ceres (Scheid 2005, 170–74).

In cremation the body, still on the bier, was placed on a pyre built of wooden logs, each layer placed at right angles to the previous one (Vitr. *De Arch.* 2.19.5). Kindling wood, papyrus, and incense might be added to help the flames take hold (Noy 2000). Before the pyre was ignited the body was anointed, the eyes opened and the deceased given a final kiss by a loved one (e.g. Val. Max. 4.6.3). The name of the deceased was then called out, and in military funerals, and in those of some emperors, the pyre was circled three times (e.g. Verg. *Aen.* 11.188–90). Perfumes and incense might be added to the pyre, these assisted burning and disguised odors, but could also be an expensive offering (Plin. *HN* 12.83). Pots, glassware, jewelry, food and small animals might be placed with the body on the pyre or thrown onto it as it burned. The pyre would have stayed alight and required attention for some hours to ensure that the body was adequately burned (Weekes 2005). Once the fire had died down the pyre was drenched with wine, the remains of bones and ashes collected and placed in a container which was delivered to the closest female relative prior to burial (e.g. Tib. 1.3.5–8). Cremated remains could be placed in the ground or in a niche within structures such as columbaria. Items such as small vessels, lamps, and jewelry were sometimes interred with the remains.

In inhumation the body was buried directly in the ground, wrapped in a simple shroud or encased in a coffin made of wood, lead or stone. Some bodies were not covered with earth, but could remain above ground on shelves in constructions such as house tombs, or be placed on earth cut shelves in underground hypogea and catacombs. Large stone and marble sarcophagi could be located above ground or within tombs. Grave goods, similar to those which might be burned on the pyre or placed with cremated remains, for example, jewelry, coins, pots, and lamps, might be buried with the inhumed body.²

Events immediately after the disposal are unclear and their exact nature and timing may have varied according to whether the body was inhumed or cremated. The utterance of some standard or formulaic words (*novissima verba*) ended the ceremonies at the point when the pyre was lit or grave filled in. These words may have included a final farewell (*vale*) to the deceased and an instruction to the mourners to leave (Verg. *Aen.* 6.213). Late commentators also refer to a meal, known as the *silicernium*, that “purged the family of their grief”, but do not state exactly where and when it was held (Festus 294).

Immediately after the funeral those who had participated were purified with fire and water (the *suffitio*), and the house of the deceased cleaned by sweeping (Festus 3L). For the family, days of rest and mourning (*feriae denicales*) followed the funeral (Cic. *Leg.* 2.22.55). Then on the ninth day after burial further cleansing rituals, a sacrifice and a feast (*cena novendialis*) near the tomb, brought this period of mourning to a close (e.g. Petr. *Sat.* 65). During the late Republic the funerals of the élite might also be marked by public banquets, distributions of food and shows (including gladiatorial combats).

Following burial the grave was supposed to be visited at regular intervals, tombs decorated, and offerings of food and wine given. Birthdays, anniversaries of deaths and certain festivals were important dates. The annual festival of *Parentalia*, held between 13 and 21 February, was a time to remember dead relatives and make offerings at graves (Ov. *Fast.* 2.533–70). Tombs could be furnished with dining areas, wells for drawing water and barbeques for cooking food, while libation pipes allowed offerings to be made directly to the dead (e.g. Graham 2005).

This was how things were supposed to happen, or at least, it is the impression gained from piecing together various snippets of information to create a composite account. How many people achieved a peaceful and dignified end, with honored disposal, followed by regular memory promotion, is impossible to judge. The following sections explore some aspects of the rituals in greater detail, focusing on the roles and expectations of certain social groups and participants, to highlight both trends in recent research, and the challenge of working with the available evidence.

Social Divisions

An adage such as: “As you were in life so you were in death” would seem to reflect the expectations that surrounded death, dying, funerals, and commemoration in Rome. Social factors such as status, wealth, age, and gender dictated the type of death and funeral you were likely to achieve. Those at the bottom of the social heap, slaves and paupers, had little or no access to medical care or even their own bed to die in. Bodies of the indigenous could be left to rot, or be dragged to mass, anonymous burial pits (*puticuli*) (Varro *Ling.* 5.25; Hopkins 1983, 208–9; Bodel 1994, 40; Graham 2007). For such people there was no dignified death scene, no funeral, no grave, no commemorative memorial, and no annual rites. Those degraded by their professions and status, or means of death, could also be stigmatized. Gladiators, for example, were marginalized in life, and in death may have been segregated from others in the cemetery; and some suicides may have been denied decent burial altogether (*CIL* 11.6528; Van Hooff 1990; Hope

2000a). Young children, including babies, may also have been treated as non-persons, receiving minimal funeral rites and burial at night (e.g. Cic. *Tusc.* 1.39). At the other extreme were the wealthy and the powerful. Polybius describes the grand funerals of the Republican male office-holding élite. The corpse was displayed on the Rostra in the Roman Forum, surrounded by mask images (*imagines*) of distinguished ancestors, all appearing to listen to a eulogy that praised the deceased and the family (Polyb. 6.53–54). The whole population of the city attended such funerals, which thus served to unite society, while underlining fundamental social divisions. Later, the funerals of the emperors and other members of the imperial family, also became theatrical pageants, rites that legitimated the transfer of power (Price 1987).

In between these social extremes, funerals and memorials may have been modest, but still tied to identity and societal expectations. Many people probably aspired to a humble but decent funeral and a grave that was marked. However, in highlighting that funerals and memorials could reflect status, recent studies have noted that this potential could be challenged, manipulated, or even inverted. Aspects of the rituals could be toyed with by the literate élite (Houghton 2011). A poet, for example, might eschew grand rites to make a statement about his life and life choices, at least in his poetic persona:

Do not let my funeral procession make its way with many masks, nor let there be a trumpet making a vain lament for my end. Do not allow a bed with an ivory pillow be prepared for me, nor let my dead body lie on a bier embroidered with gold. Let there be no procession of incense-bearers, but only the humble rites that mark a poor man's funeral. (Prop. 2.13b, 1–8)

The philosopher, and one-time adviser to the emperor Nero, Seneca the Younger, stipulated that he should have no funeral (Tac. *Ann.* 15.64). Frontinus, consul in the late first century CE, stated that he did not wish to receive any funerary monument, “my memory will survive if my life has deserved it” (Plin. *Ep.* 9.19). Others might exaggerate their wealth in death, allocating a disproportionate amount of their estate to the funeral and commemoration. Some authors claimed that rich men, desperate to leave a final good impression, freed their slaves in their will to boost the number of free men who would follow their bier; an act that the emperor Augustus tried to curtail (e.g. Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 4.24.6). The fact that many young children were buried decently and their graves marked suggests that, despite statements to the opposite, they were honored and greatly mourned (King 2000). People of very modest means, including slaves, could also join together and form burial clubs (*collegia*) that provided a communal tomb and, by regular small subscriptions and tapping into the patronage system, allowed people to prepare for the cost of burial (Patterson 1992; Bodel 2008). For other individuals, for example, freed slaves, auxiliary soldiers, and even gladiators, funerary rites and the cemetery were an opportunity to negotiate

their place in society; a medium in which the disadvantages of life could (in part at least) be suppressed (Zanker 1975; Kleiner 1977; Hope 2000a, b; Mouritsen 2005). An ex-slave, for example, might not be celebrated by a statue in the Forum, but he could be in the cemetery.

The mighty could also fall, suffering humiliating ends, their bodies mutilated, and then denied decent burial and commemoration. The fate of Pompey was noted above; even emperors, such as Gaius, Nero, Galba, and Domitian, could face ignominy in death, meeting sudden rather than honored ends complemented, if they were fortunate, by rapid burial in very simply marked graves. The ultimate sanction was to condemn the memory of the deceased. In so called *damnatio memoriae*, statues could be defaced and toppled, *imagines* banned from public display, names removed from inscriptions and property confiscated (Varner 2004; Flower 2006). This was the opposite of what the élite aspired to: an honored memory and lasting reputation.

Funerals, and the following events, were social occasions, an opportunity for people to meet up, to show off, to be entertained, and even to flirt. Ovid teased that grieving widows with their disheveled hair could be rather attractive (Ov. *Ars Am.* 3.429–32). There was an expectation that the dead would have a good send off; Horace noted that “the neighborhood praises a funeral put on with style” (*Sat.* 2.5.105–6). However, the display of social divisions and personal identity was not static. Cicero noted that differences in wealth should cease in death, but he was looking back to earlier ideals when the dangers of aristocratic competition were curbed for the stability of Rome (*Leg.* 2.23.59). By the late Republic, funerals were display events and symbols of power. The uproar generated at Julius Caesar’s funeral, the crowd whipped up to a fury by the sight of the dictator’s wounded corpse and the inflammatory speech of Antony, is the most powerful illustration of this (App. *B Civ.* 2.146–47; Sumi 2005, 97–122). Under the emperors, funerals as political statements and hotbeds for festering discontent could not be tolerated, and the grandest of funerary displays were only appropriate for the emperor and his family. It has been argued that during the early empire there was a shift from processions, eulogies, and grand monuments to more internalized and privatized aspects of display; it may also be the case that as the accoutrements of funerary display became accessible to more people, including freed slaves, the élite moved their expressive energies elsewhere (Hesberg 1992; Bodel 1999; Wallace-Hadrill 2008b).

Funerary practices in the city of Rome illustrate that social roles and identities could be contested, created, inverted, and even destroyed. The rites could provide a mirror of society and its values, but this mirror could also distort. Funerals, and the associated rites, were public and social events, opportunities for people to come together, to communicate messages, to play out distinctions and expectations, or indeed to subvert them.

Mourners and Undertakers

Issues of identity and status were not just focused on the dead, but also on the living participants at the funeral. In Rome, family and friends traditionally performed the key roles of washing the body, carrying the body and burying or cremating it. Roles were assigned by gender. Men performed the physical role of carrying the bier and made formal and public funeral addresses.

Women were expected to mourn and were responsible for preparing and tending the body. Among the less well-off, these traditional roles probably persisted throughout the Roman period: people had little choice but to perform the essential tasks for themselves. However, for those with money it was possible to disengage from the more arduous, unpleasant and demeaning roles associated with caring for the corpse. The physical and emotional gap between the living and the dead could be bridged by hired servile help – mourners and undertakers – who were paid to prepare, tend, and weep over the dead body.

It was women who were most likely to be affected by the use of hired help. Tradition dictated that the women of the deceased's family played a prominent role in public mourning and funeral ritual. It was women who wailed, cried, and sang laments; women who beat their breasts, scratched their cheeks, and pulled at and dirtied their hair; and it was women who usually gave the last kiss to the dying, washed the dead body, and finally received the ashes (Richlin 2001; Corbeill 2004, 67–106; Mustakallio 2005; Dutsch 2008). It could be argued that death was both degrading and empowering for women; that women fulfilled essential but marginalized roles. On the one hand, women could be seen as taking on the dirty and polluted tasks associated with death; on the other, women were playing a vital role in the important transition from life to death that was central to the well-ordered running of society (*cf.* Stears 1998). Women as mourners could be powerful expressive figures calling upon others to give vent to their grief, and even inciting them to take revenge for a death. The fact that this role could be viewed as dangerous, distracting or disturbing is reflected in legislation which sought to curb women's mourning (e.g. Cic. *Leg.* 2.23.59), and that extreme female mourning behavior was characterized as the polar opposite of the male ideal (e.g. Sen. *Ep.* 63.13).

For those with money it was possible to hire mourners and undertakers to complement or act as a substitute for the female relatives. The extent to which these death specialists were employed, and the exact nature of the undertaking business, are not well documented. Some of the best insights come not from Rome, but from two inscriptions found at Puteoli (Pozzuoli, Italy) and Cumae (Cuma, Italy), both probably dating to the early imperial period, which set out

regulations for funerals that were normally contracted out to firms of professionals (AE 1971 n.88; Gardner and Wiedemann 1991, 25; Hinard and Dumont 2004). The regulation from Puteoli noted that the undertaker's workers had to bathe separately to others, that they were only to enter the town on business and that then they were to be marked out by wearing a colorful cap. Death could bring a sense of pollution, both physical and spiritual (see below), which affected undertakers as handlers of corpses. In literature, undertakers were viewed as ill-omened, but also as suspect characters because they made a profit from the misfortune of death (e.g. Val. Max. 5.2.10). The employment of undertakers and mourners reduced the need for the female relatives of the deceased to be so intimately involved in the preparation and tending of the corpse before disposal, or providing dramatic displays of grief. Some paid roles, such as that of the *praeeficae* (lament singers), were traditional and well established, but it has been suggested that the use of other undertakers and mourners increased during the early imperial period, creating a need to legislate for their role, as witnessed by the inscriptions from Puteoli and Cumae (Bodel 2004). Extreme female reaction to loss, at least among the elite, may now have been viewed as demeaning, as something that characterized the lower orders and those paid to do such jobs. Elite women could find themselves in an uncomfortable and often contradictory position; as mothers, wives and daughters they were expected to lead the mourning, to express their loss, but, simultaneously, grief was more to be suppressed than flaunted (Mustakallio 2005; Hope 2009, 125–32; Hope 2011).

In the eyes of many male elite authors, guided by philosophy, mourning (as opposed to grief) was a performance. Mourning was acted out at funerals by people hired for the job, and thus for men, and women of a certain standing, to act so and to give physical and audible expression to their loss in public was false and at best melodramatic. This emphasizes the performative and formalized content of the Roman funeral. Undertakers and mourners could play integral roles in funerary processes, yet still be regarded as ancillary, separate, or even polluted; they were helping but profiting, central yet sullied. Mourners and undertakers were important people in terms of the rites, but because of their low status they have left little trace in our sources. Thus, whether there was a real increase in the use of such hired help is difficult to judge. However, at the very least the status of these helpers serves to underline the parallel ambivalent position of women in funeral ritual. Even if some women did not have to handle the corpse or lead the dirges and laments themselves, they could still be viewed as death's agents. How the mourners performed could still reflect on the woman of the house, who was perceived as being in charge of these representatives (Sterbenc Erker 2011). Mourning was one of the duties of a woman, but the nature, extent and quality of that mourning could be defined, controlled and judged by men.

Rituals of Transition

Undertakers, hired mourners, and women were guardians of the rituals of transition that moved the dead from this world to the next and reintegrated the living survivors. The importance of this sense of transition is exemplified by the parallels between Roman birth and death rites. At birth, a baby was placed on the ground, to check its viability and to symbolize its acceptance into the family. The dead (or dying) were also placed on the ground and this act may have been to confirm death or to symbolize that at death, man returned to the earth. Artemidorus noted that, “the dead, like babies, are wrapped in cloth strips and are placed on the ground; and the end is to the beginning as the beginning is to the end” (1.113). The eyes of a baby were opened, the eyes of the dead were closed, and the dead and the newborn were both washed and clothed. At birth and death, women, in their roles as mothers and mourners, might expose their breasts, and milk was one of the traditional offerings made to the dead, just as it was the food of life for the new born (Corbeill 2004, 67–106). At the grave or pyre women, hired professional singers, are thought to have sang a traditional lament, the *nenia*, to encourage the dead to leave this world. The content of these laments is not known, but the word *nenia* was also used for children’s rhymes (and some magical incantations), and it is possible that the different types of *nenia* shared repetitive and soothing aspects (Dutsch 2008). Birth and death also brought a sense of pollution to a new mother and to the recently bereaved, and both underwent rituals of purification.

Midwives, undertakers and professional mourners, were the agents of the associated rituals, selling their expertise in guiding the living into this world and guiding the dead out of it; they were marred by their physical intimacy with human biological processes, by their closeness to bodies that were in transition (Dutsch 2008, 272; Hope 2010).

Death was a problematic time for the bereaved. Not only had they suffered trauma and loss, but they were stigmatized by the death. The acknowledgement of a death meant that the family became a *familia funesta*, obliged to undertake the funeral and also prohibited from its usual activities. The presence of the corpse brought a sense of pollution to the house, home, and family that the subsequent rituals sought to redress (Lennon 2013). In Rome the house of the bereaved family was signaled by a cypress branch (Plin. *HN* 16.139), and the mourners were in some senses isolated from the rest of society, identified by their demeanor, gestures and clothing. In many respects, the mourners marked their state by doing the opposite of what was usually expected, for example, not washing, not eating, and wearing dark clothing which was usually associated with the poor; grief was expressed through the inversion of norms (Ochs 1993, 48). The direct handling of the corpse by women and paid undertakers meant that these inversions and any

sense of pollution affected the men of the house least of all. A death in the family could be particularly problematic, however, for men with a public religious role. In 82 BCE when the dictator Sulla was presiding at the festival of Hercules, he was unable to visit his dying wife and was forced to divorce her and have her removed from his house (Plut. *Sull.* 35). When the emperor Tiberius delivered the eulogy for his son Drusus in 23 CE, a veil was placed between him and the body, “so that the eyes of a high priest might not look upon a corpse” (Sen. *Consolation to Marcia* 15.3).

Was this sense of pollution real or symbolic; physical or spiritual; active or anachronistic? Did people believe that the dead were ill-omened and had continuing power and influence? Or were many customs simply the vestiges of the beliefs of earlier generations? In Rome, views about the continuing presence of the dead and the afterlife were diverse and varied, everything from death being final to a spatially well-defined kingdom of the dead. For some, non-performance of the accepted rituals meant that the dead could not rest in peace, would be undernourished, discontented, and a possible threat to the living (Felton 1999; Ogden 2002). For others the afterlife and belief in spirits was just superstitious nonsense, or came from human vanity that could not accept the extinction of the self (e.g. Plin. *HN* 7.188–9). In between these extreme views we are left to question common actions; for example, did people provide food and items for the dead because they believed in the afterlife; or because these acts were tied to tradition, duty, and the memory of the dead; or because the acts expressed the status of the living (and the dead) by the display and disposal of property? However, to polarize belief and non-belief, or separate religion and custom, may be misleading. Roman religion was more about ritual and observance than following set doctrine or a holy book. Even if the élite sources promoted skepticism we should not overlook the importance of a sense of custom and continuity. We can note, for example, that the best description of the festival of *Parentalia* dates from the Augustan Age (Ov. *Fast.* 2.533–70), a time of a religious revival, and the reinvention of tradition, grounded in a perceived sense of continuity. Aspects of funerary ritual did change: the use of the *imagines* declined; employment of undertakers and hired mourners may have redefined familial, especially female roles; types and designs of monuments shifted; and perhaps most strikingly there were changes (now little understood by us) in the relative use of inhumation and cremation. But despite all this the essential rituals were regarded as providing stability and continuity, and as being a marker of Roman identity.³

In ancient Rome death was a problematic time for the bereaved and the survivors, and this was often represented by a generalized sense of pollution, ideas of transition and the inversion of norms. For some there was a spiritual element to the changes facing the living and the dead. For most, the associated rituals were about mediating the inevitability of death, acknowledging the loss

and then returning things to normality. Funerary rituals highlighted the contrasts between the living and the dead, between the bereaved and non-bereaved, and provided a period of transition, a journey, for the corpse and the survivors.

Guide to Further Reading

There are an increasing number of books available which cover aspects of Roman death, but few deal in detail with funerals and funerary practices. For overviews of the essential rites and the supporting evidence see Toynbee 1971, Hopkins 1983, Bodel 1999, Hope 2007 and Hope 2009. For reconstructions of the locational context and experience of the Roman funeral, see Favro and Johanson 2010, Johanson 2011, Graham 2011b. Certain aspects of the rituals have been studied in detail in recent years, and of particular note are studies on the *imagines* (Flower 1996), wills (Champlin 1991), the funerary pyre (Noy 2000), the role of undertakers (Bodel 2000; 2004) and *os resectum* (Graham 2011a). Women's role in funeral ritual, as mourners, both hired and familial, has been a recent focus (Richlin 2001; Mustakallio 2005) with interesting parallels drawn between death and birth rituals (Corbeill 2004; Dutsch 2008; Hope 2010). Studies of literary presentations of death and creations of idealized death scenes in varied literary genres are also an area of renewed attention (Edwards 2007; Erasmo 2008).

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ENDNOTES

1. Due to the confines of space it is not possible to provide full references to all the ancient and secondary sources relevant to this section. Where practical I provide an illustrative example of an ancient source or refer to a secondary source that lists relevant evidence and provides discussion. For fundamental overviews of funerary rites, with supporting evidence see Cuq 1896; Toynbee 1971; Bodel 1999; Hope 2007, 85–127; Hope 2009, 65–96. The most detailed ancient literary sources for the deathbed, funeral and associated rites include: Polyb. 6.53–54; Cic. *Leg.* 2.22–23; Petr. *Sat.* 77–78; Stat. *Silv.* 5.1; Lucian *On Mourning*. Important evidence for the funeral

procession and the display of the body are derived from the so-called Amiternum relief (Toynbee 1971, 46–7; Bodel 1999, 264–5; Hughes 2005) and Haterii relief (Toynbee 1971, 44–5; Sinn and Freyberger 1996, n.5; Bodel 1999, 267; Leach 2006) which both depict the bier/funerary couch, mourners and musicians.

2. Grave goods in Rome and elsewhere in the Roman empire were rarely elaborate. Excessive disposal of property on the pyre or in a grave could be frowned upon e.g. Lucian, *On Mourning* 19. Excavation reports frequently list common grave items such as coins, lamps, perfume bottles and other vessels, although many graves had few or no furnishings see e.g. Tomei 2006; Buccellato *et al.* 2003.
3. This sense of continuity was seen in the late Antique period when despite religious change some of the basic features of funerary practices persisted, e.g. eulogies, funeral processions, grave goods, feasting at the tomb, and at least initially shared burial grounds for pagans and Christians: see Johnson 1997; Trumbower 2001; Burman 2004; Bodel 2008.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Roman Cemeteries and Tombs

Barbara E. Borg

‘But somehow I want it to be in the public way; so you *must* get me a place in the suburbs. Scapula’s [mausoleum] is very much in the public way and furthermore has the advantage of being close to town so that one would not have to spend a whole day in a country house.’ Cicero wrote to his friend Atticus about the tomb he intended to build for his recently deceased daughter, Tullia (*Att.* 12.37.2, transl. Shackleton Bailey). Yet he is also worried about the tomb’s safety: ‘But I have to consider how to ensure that the place remains as it were consecrated ground under the innumerable changes of ownership which may occur in the infinite future, provided our society survives’ (*ibid.* 12.19.1). The devastated father wanted a memorial that fulfilled a range of desires, some more traditional, such as easy accessibility for frequent visits and security about its persistence, and others more recent, like a *celeberimus locus*, a most prominent and busy location, and utmost visibility. Through most of the Republican period, people used to satisfy their desires for representation and ostentation with elaborate funeral ceremonies while the tombs themselves were rather inconspicuous, either simple shaft graves, often situated in clusters of small cemeteries near the roads, or else rough chambers hewn into the soft native tuff rock (Pinza 1914; Albertoni 1983; Talamo 1987; Hesberg 1992, 19–22; Meinecke 2014). The latter type was especially popular with the prominent aristocratic families, who established rock tombs as family mausolea to be used over several generations. Good examples are the tombs of the Corneli Scapolae of the fourth and third centuries BCE (Pisani Sartorio and Quilici Gigli 1987) and of the Corneli Scipiones outside Porta Capena near the Appian Way (Coarelli 1972; Volpe *et al.* 2015). The latter was founded around 280 BCE and contained the large inscribed sarcophagi of family members starting with L. Cornelius Scipio Barbatus. The last family member attested for the tomb is Cn. Scipio Hispanus, and the mausoleum probably fell out of use after the family branch became extinct in the early first century BCE.

Yet the tomb of the Scipios is also one of the first to set a new trend: that of using tombs as proper monuments intended to impress the passerby and to advertise their patrons, their families, and their achievements. A painted frieze on the rock face that was renewed on a regular basis celebrated historic events in which the family was involved. In the second half of the second century, P. Scipio Africanus minor updated the tomb’s design with a showy façade decorated with the statues of Scipio Africanus maior, L. Scipio Asiaticus, and

the poet Ennius, his most prominent ancestors and the poet who had sung their praise: his statue assigned the family their historic dimension and eternal fame. From the early first century BCE, the major roads leading in and out of Rome started to be lined with tombs of various shapes and sizes, used by those who had the means and felt the need to draw attention to their status and accomplishments: on the “streets of tombs,” those taking part in the fierce competition for public recognition, political power, and offices found a perfect stage (Hesberg and Zanker 1987; Zanker 1988).

While this trend included members of the old aristocratic families, it appealed especially to social climbers, *homines novi*, like Cicero. Most remarkable, perhaps, is the fact that more than any other group in society, freedmen appreciated this opportunity for self-representation (Petersen 2006). Between 80 and 90 % of all Roman epitaphs can be attributed to *liberti* or their first-generation descendants (Taylor 1961; Mouritsen 2004), who often decorated their tombs with portrait representations modeled on elite public honorific monuments (Kleiner 1987; Kockel 1993). While to them the latter were largely unachievable, they exploited the greater liberty within the funerary realm in order to advertise through inscriptions and imagery what they regarded as their greatest accomplishments: citizenship, a legal marriage, and freeborn children (Petersen 2006).

The most popular tomb types of this period were altars of various sizes or cube-shaped monuments set up at the front of, or within, funerary precincts, but this era also featured the first cemeteries with a regular layout and street grid, and chamber tombs lined up like terraced houses e.g. on Via Statilia (Figure 19.1) and Via Salaria (Colini 1943; Lissi Caronna 1969). From the Augustan period onwards, both the imperial family and other great Roman *gentes* erected large *columbaria* for up to several hundred burials of their slaves and freedmen, with niches for cinerary urns or terracotta *ollae* pre-installed in pairs, which often covered entire walls and have lent the name “dovecote” to this type of tomb (Figure 19.2). Rather than being cheap mass burial sites, as is sometimes supposed, these *columbaria* were impressive monuments, advertising their patrons’ status and generosity in offering their *familia* the opportunity to proudly share in their big names (Bodel 2008, 195–7; 210–19). Other *columbaria* were erected by voluntary associations, who thus provided their members and their families with affordable but appealing burial space, and with some confidence in continued commemoration by the community. This latter point was particularly important since it was the only kind of “immortality” one could normally hope for. More ambitious monuments for individuals or families included temple-like *aediculae* (sometimes set on high pedestals), curving *exedrae*, circular tumuli (either tower-like like the tomb of Caecilia Metella, or wide and relatively low like that of Augustus himself) and various extravagant shapes, such as pyramids. The best known is the pyramid of C. Cestius, another social climber, surely

inspired by the recent conquest of Egypt (Toynbee 1971; Eisner 1986; Hesberg 1992, 22–37).



Figure 19.1 Late Republican ‘terraced’ tombs for *liberti* on Via Statilia with the portraits of the deceased set into the façade, after Capitolium 1943, fig. 4.

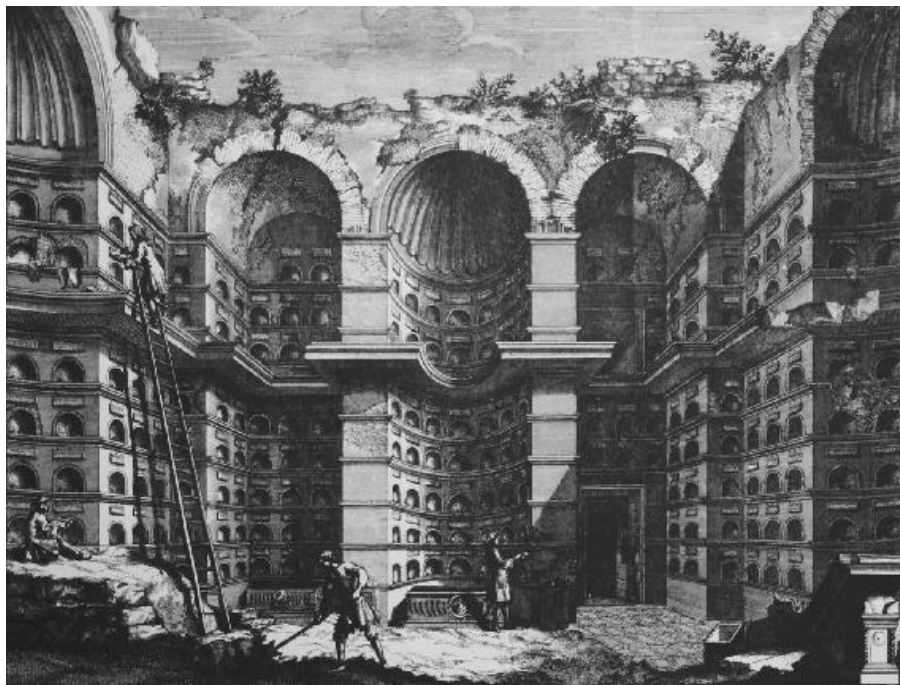


Figure 19.2 The Monumentum Liviae on the Appian Way, a *columbarium* for the slaves and freedmen of the household of Livia, wife of Augustus. After F. Bianchini, *Camera ed iscrizioni sepulcrali de'liberti, servi ed ufficiali della casa di Augusto scoperte nella Via Appia con le annotazioni di Francesco Bianchini veronese*. Rome, 1727, pl. 4.

After Augustus, tombs changed considerably. Many of the previous monument types ceased to be used before the mid-first century, and “house tombs” now became the most popular type of monument. They were not strictly similar in shape to a Roman house, especially since they were often equipped with the gabled roof and pediment reminiscent of public buildings (Wallace-Hadrill 2008), but they were rectangular buildings with interior space for burial and often lined up in rows along the major and many secondary roads. While many of these tombs were built for individual families, others were owned by associations or other groups of individuals who either could not afford to build a tomb for themselves and shared the costs by purchasing only one or more niches or *ollae*, or who preferred burial within a collective tomb in order to secure the persistence of commemoration.

Such tombs were usually built in *opus mixtum* (concrete faced with brick and tuff blocks arranged in diagonal patterns) or, from the mid-second century onwards, in concrete faced with brick alone (*opus latericium*), and their interiors were adorned with all the splendor the owner could afford. A particularly richly decorated example is the mausoleum of C. Valerius Herma on the Via Triumphalis under St. Peter’s in the Vatican. Its rear and side walls featured stucco *aediculae* in which the tomb’s patrons and various divinities were depicted in high stucco relief. These features have suggested to some that, after the establishment of the empire when offices, privileges, and status no longer depended on the Roman people but largely on the emperor, advertising oneself to the public no longer made sense. Tomb paintings and, later, sarcophagus decoration tended to focus on a private world of feelings and emotions, above all of marital love and family affection, of mourning for dead relatives, and of imaginary paradisiacal worlds. The sepulchral sphere, so it is concluded, had become a private affair where personal relations and affection were more important than self-representation targeted at strangers (e.g. Hesberg 1992, 42–5, 206–7, 214–21, 229–30; Zanker and Ewald 2004, 179–85; Petersen 2006, 196–7, 215 with minor qualifications). Some of these observations are surely valid, but some need qualification.

As Francisca Feraudi-Gruénais has demonstrated, we are not dealing with a development from impressive outer appearance and modest (or no) interiors to modest exteriors and luxurious interiors. Rather, while interior space was now desired by all, its more lavish decoration was an additional feature of those tombs which also had more showy façades (Feraudi-Gruénais 2001). This is also true for the Mausoleum of Valerius Herma, which is the largest and showiest in its part of the necropolis (Figure 19.3). Secondly, the new

building material, brick, was not just a cheap substitute for travertine or marble. While less wealthy patrons surely appreciated its affordability, in the second century brick production and construction developed into a real art, with concave bricks allowing the finest of mortar layers, which, in turn, were painted in a contrasting color. Elaborate, molded brick ornaments decorated façades and framed doors, windows, and inscription panels (*tituli*). Thirdly, when looking at the general trends in the use of “house” and “terraced” tombs, their beginnings are fairly modest but through the late first and second centuries their potential for display was increasingly explored. The richest tombs even adopted elements from temple architecture, such as Corinthian pilasters and abundantly ornamented pediments (Figure 19.3). Color schemes became more varied, with red pilasters and cornices set against yellow walls (or the other way round), with marble pilaster bases, capitals, or corbels, with intarsia of colored brick and tuff, and with architectural ornaments painted in bright colors and even gilded. The latter can no longer be seen with the naked eye but have been identified during restorations of some of these tombs.



Figure 19.3 Mausolea A–L in the Vatican necropolis under St. Peters. The mausoleum of Valerius Herma is the widest one in the centre.

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Even modest tombs featured inscriptions, which were always directed at the passers-by. Due to the limitations of space and the resulting restraints on smaller budgets, these were not always main thoroughfares, but the secondary roads and small piazzas on which they bordered would be frequented as well, not least during the festivals for the dead and on the occasion of other burials in the same necropolis. In most cases, these *tituli* only state the founder(s) of the tomb by name while others admitted to burial were merely mentioned collectively as relatives (*suis*) or freed persons and their descendants (*libertis libertabusque posterisque eorum*). All the focus was on the tomb’s patron who was proudly presented as the head not only of a family but of a *familia*, a household including slaves and freedmen, generously providing them with at least a decent, sometimes a magnificent, burial space. That hierarchies in these tombs were carefully observed is clear from the allocation of burial space. The majority of the *familia* was often relegated to anonymous urns or graves in a less favorable place, or even a frontal courtyard, or, after the introduction of inhumation, to a lower storey. The most prominent places in the rear of the main burial chamber or on the upper storey were reserved for the patron of the tomb and his blood relatives.

To be sure, there were also unpretentious graves and tombs, ranging from simple interments of clay urns or bodies in the earth, sometimes covered with

large roof tiles (*a cappuccina*), to half-barrel shaped *a cassone* tombs, usually stuccoed red, to small *aediculae*, pyramids or stelae, to “house” or “terraced” tombs of miniature size and with hardly any ornamentation (Figure 19.4). But as we can see from this range of tomb types and styles, it is hard to maintain that people were generally unconcerned about self-display. Rather, and this is perhaps the most important point about the development of tombs and cemeteries from Augustus to the Severans, it was a larger section of the freedmen class that now was interested in, and could afford, more conspicuous tombs.

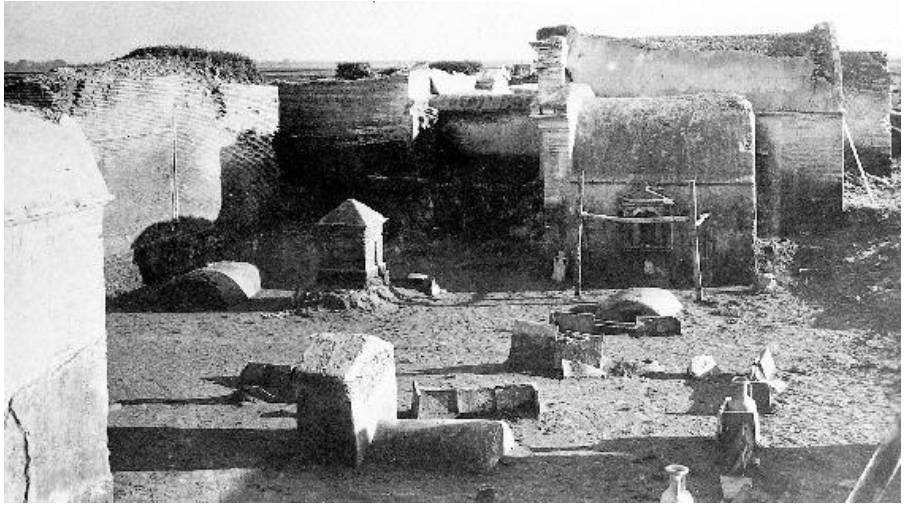


Figure 19.4 The necropolis of Isola Sacra, area north of mausoleum 55 with smaller monuments and graves of various types. After: Angelucci, S., *et al.* 1990 “Sepoltura e riti nella necropoli dell’Isola Sacra,” *Bollettino di archeologia* 5–6: 49–113, fig. 3.

When we look at élite tombs – and by élite I mean the social élite of equestrians and senators as well as the very rich and ambitious freedmen who used the same types of tombs – the picture becomes even more varied. As indicated above, the abandonment of monument types of the late Republican and Augustan eras, and especially of the large and conspicuous tumuli, has often been interpreted as a new lack of interest in competition and self-representation. But the speed of this abandonment is strongly reminiscent of the equally abrupt cessation of public portrait monuments in the metropolis. During the Republic, huge numbers of statues were erected to honor major and minor dignitaries. About the same time when the tombs in question disappeared, honorific statues in the main public spaces declined dramatically in numbers except for a few endorsed by the emperor in special cases: the emperor had claimed these public spaces for himself (Eck 1984; Alföldy 2001).

Restrictions concerning the amount of funerary display, *leges sumptuariae*,

are well known from various periods including the Augustan. Cicero mentions a surcharge for tombs that exceeded certain limits in size, and a special tax on columns (Cic. *Att.* 12.35.2, 63.1, 13.6.1; cf. Engels 1998, 172), and burial in prominent places in the Campus Martius needed permission from the emperor (Wesch-Klein 1993, 108–9). Evidently, the funerary realm was a sensitive area, monitored carefully by the authorities. Whether Augustus formally introduced another sumptuary law or whether he just discouraged people from pretentious display, as is more likely, is a matter of secondary importance. But as funerals and tombs were and remained a major means of bestowing honor upon a deceased and his family, these restrictions tie in very well with the general need for the emperor to exceed everybody else in this respect (London 1997), and it is surely no coincidence that the last public *pompa funebris* of a private individual is attested in 22 CE (Tac. *Ann.* 3.76.1–2; Wesch-Klein 1993, 19–38; Bodel 1999, 271). Most likely, the social and financial élite steered away from the most ostentatious traditional tomb types, materials and locations, and not entirely of their own impetus either (Eck 1984, 148; Engels 1998, 173; Verzár-Bass 1998, 412–5).

This view is supported by a number of first-century exceptions to the rule, most notably tombs of some notorious imperial *liberti*. To Pliny's disgust, M. Antonius Pallas, one of three particularly powerful freedmen of Claudius, boasted in his tomb inscription about *ornamenta praetoria* and other honors granted him by the senate *ob fidem pietatemque erga patronus* in a language that is strongly reminiscent of honorific inscriptions for the most deserving members of the aristocracy (Eck 1987, 76–7 on Plin. *Ep.* 7.29; 8.6). Similarly, the inscription on the tomb of Nero's infamous freedman, Epaphroditus, in his *horti* north of the Via Praenestina, detailed his various extraordinary achievements. Its full length was 5 meters, and the largest letters measured 23 centimeters (Eck 1987, 77–8 pl. 8b). The tomb erected by Domitian's freedman Abascantus to his wife Priscilla was prominently located at the second mile of the Appian Way and must have been an outstanding monument (Stat. *Silv.* 5.237–41; *LTURS* 4: 269–71 s.v. *Priscillae sepulcrum* [P. Chini – A. Bianchi]); it is again explained by its owner's special relationship with the emperor, who had granted him various other privileges as well.

Restraint in self-display among other patrons did not last for too long, however. Around the turn of the first and second century, a new type of impressive, free-standing tomb was introduced, the temple tomb and its variations. In its purest form, this tomb type, unique in Italy to Rome and its wider surroundings, resembled a full-fledged temple with podium, front stairs, colonnaded porch, and acroteria on the corners and apex of the roof. The most likely inspiration for temple tombs was the *templum Gentis Flaviae*. It had been erected by Domitian on his birthplace on the Quirinal Hill and served as both tomb and temple for the imperial cult of the Flavian dynasty, thus

combining two functions that had been kept separate by previous as well as subsequent emperors (*LTUR* 2: 368–9 s.v. Gens Flavia, templum [F. Coarelli]; Dabrowa 1996).

Temple tombs have been thought to imply their patrons' apotheosis or deification, an explanation sometimes offered for portrait statues in the guise of gods as well. However, epitaphs and other texts make this quite unlikely. Rather, the deceased are said to possess some divine qualities. An inscribed poem for Regilla, the deceased wife of Herodes Atticus, one of the most extravagant consuls of the Antonine era, sophist, and teacher of imperial princes makes this clear (*IG* 14.1389 A; cf. Skenteri 2005, esp. 29–65). Set up in the 160s CE in her funerary garden, the so-called Triopion on the family's Appian estate, it explicitly denies that Regilla had become a goddess, experienced an apotheosis, or received a temple (ll. 43–5), but it constantly balances very artfully on the borderline between human and divine by attributing to Regilla all sorts of divine virtues and honors. Her own cenotaph – she was actually buried in Herodes' birthplace in Greece – appropriately took the shape of a temple tomb, this time, however of the rarer variety with a round cella modelled on temples like the Pantheon (Galli 2002, 112, 127–32 with slightly different interpretation).

The temple tomb as the typical grave marker of the financial and social élite was ultimately a specific kind of honorific monument, inspired by imperial precedents. As such, it referred to the general character and virtues of the deceased, elevating them to a heroic realm. It thus was suitable to members of all social classes including those who had no high-ranking offices and *honores* to boast about, like the rich freedmen or, indeed, women. Sometimes, portrait statues stood in front of the tombs like honorific monuments, and some tombs even featured tall niches in their façades for their display. The social élite could add the symbols of their offices and status such as their official chair (*sella curulis*) or the magistrates' rods (*fascēs*) to the outer decoration of these tombs (Schäfer 1989), and they inscribed their *honores* on the walls and architraves. The early Antonine mausoleum of Cluvius Maximus Paullinus, for instance, had one large inscription at the front over the door with his name in letters 18 centimeters high together with his two most important offices (consul and *VIIvir epulonum*), while two reliefs on the long sides detailed his full *cursus honorum* and displayed the symbols of his political and priestly offices in relief (Schäfer 1989, 364–5 no. A2; Figure 19.5).

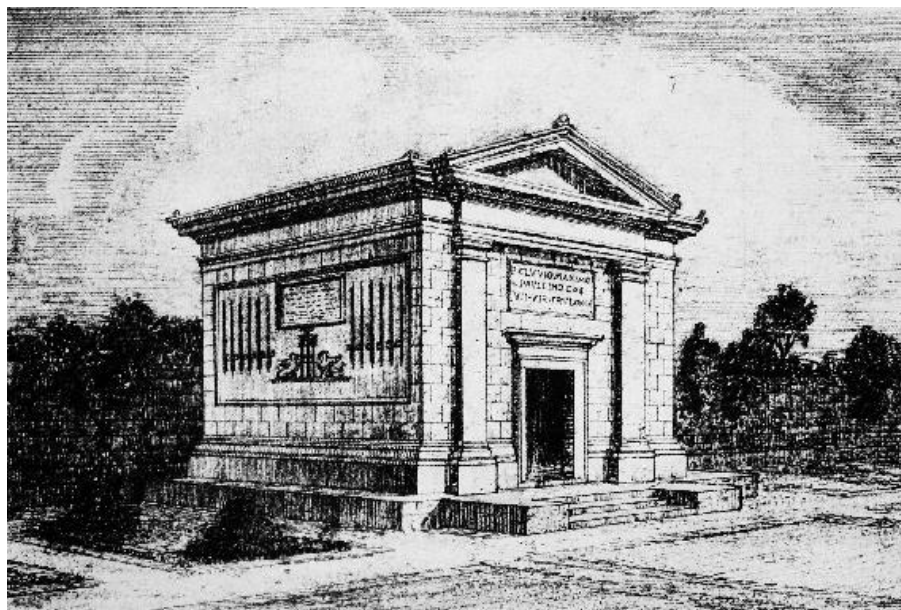


Figure 19.5 Temple tomb of the consul P. Cluvius Maximus Paullinus on the Via Casilina, detailing his *cursus honorum* in inscriptions and depicting the symbols of this offices in relief. After: Caraffa, G. 1933. *Il monumento sepolcrale di P. Cluvio Maximo Paullino*. Roma.

The most ostentatious temple tombs were built entirely of marble like that of Paullinus, or were at least partly veneered with marble, as was probably the case on the tomb of the Haterii, another freedmen family with intimate connections to the government (Sinn and Freyberger 1996, 22–9). Others had marble fronts only, like an anonymous tomb at Torraccio di Torrenova, now reconstructed in the Museo Nazionale delle Terme (Inv. 121509; Quilici 1974, 577–88 no. 479) or the recently discovered tomb of M. Nonius Macrinus, *suffect* consul in 154, companion in arms (*comes*) and friend (*amicus*) of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius (Rossi and Arizza 2012). Many employed marble on a smaller scale for bases and capitals of pilasters and columns, while others again were built entirely of brick, often bi-chrome, painted and gilded.

As indicated above, there were variations to these tombs. Some had engaged columns or pilasters rather than a free-standing front porch; others had pilasters only at the corners. The number of stories ranged from one to three, and when there was more than one story, the upper rooms were used for the commemorative ceremonies, while the lower held the burials. In accordance with their ostentatious outer appearance, their interior decoration consisted of stuccoed ceilings, while walls and floors were often covered with marble. Ironically, it is exactly this splendor that has resulted in the poor state of preservation of these tomb types, and the little attention they attracted from scholars, despite their great popularity and abundance in the Roman *suburbium* (for the most comprehensive list cf. Griesbach 2007, 165–92).

Stripped of their marble decoration for the adornment of medieval and Renaissance palaces and churches, or even just to burn for lime, they then became extremely vulnerable to weathering and decay.

The situation in the third century is far more difficult to assess for various reasons. First, one of our main criteria for dating buildings vanishes. Especially in the second century, bricks were sometimes stamped with the name of the workshop's owner and can thus be dated, but after Caracalla such stamps fell out of use until they re-appeared only under the Tetrarchy. Secondly, the number of inscriptions in general, and thus the information they contain, also declines, removing another tool for dating and also leaving us guessing about the tomb's patrons. Building techniques on their own can provide only a very rough indication of dates. Facings in alternate layers of brick and tuff blocks (*opus vittatum* or *listatum*) do become more common from the later third century onwards, but earlier examples are frequent. The use of recycled materials is another characteristic of buildings of the late third and fourth centuries, but common already from the 270s onwards when the erection of the Aurelian Wall resulted in the destruction of multiple buildings and the need to remove the rubble (Coates-Stephens 2001). It is, therefore, often only the relative chronology of more long-lived and complex cemeteries and the style of decoration, especially of painting, that provide some broad indications of date.

A number of features and trends can still be identified (Borg 2013). The first and most obvious is a general trend to use the underlying bedrock for burial. Demand for burial space in easy reach of Rome had increased ever since the foundation of the city, and it became more pressing with its rapid growth during the late Republic and the widespread return to inhumation in the course of the second century CE. From the late second century onwards, various options to extend space in depth were explored. Family tombs with similar layouts and façades as those above ground were often dug into rock faces, of which the Tomb of the Nasonii (early third century CE) is a famous example because of its exceptionally rich interior decoration with mythological images (Messineo 2000; Borg 2013, 59–62, 244–6). Such tombs cease after about the mid-third century, but at the same time, underground galleries, occasionally attested in the early third century, became more popular. While some were of very limited size and perhaps owned by a single family, the majority were communal. Many early ones exploited pre-existing subterranean hydraulic systems or mines for pozzolana (volcanic sand), but others were systematically excavated according to a grid or fishbone pattern, continuously extended, both in length and in depth, the tunnels running up to several hundred meters with some being even several kilometers long. At the same time, their floors were lowered by digging deeper into the bedrock in order to extend wall space to accommodate even larger numbers of burial slots (*loculi*). Within these gallery systems, there was a hierarchy of grave types

from simple *loculus* graves closed with a marble slab or just a few tiles, to *arcosolia*, arched niches with inhumation graves in their bottoms, to large niches for sarcophagi, and whole rooms, *cubicula*, which could be richly decorated with painting or even marble incrustation (Nuzzo 2000). The galleries thus provided for a range of needs and budgets, from single poor burials to self-contained spaces for families and small associations.

During the fourth century, many of these gallery systems developed into the better-known Christian Roman catacombs. Although the general assumption has been that, apart from a few family hypogea, all the catacomb nuclei were established by and for Christian communities (and certainly, there are indications of Christian burials in many of them) serious doubts have been raised about exclusive Christian ownership or usage (Rebillard 2003; Bodel 2008). There is no evidence that the early Christian communities had a particular desire to bury their dead in exclusively Christian cemeteries – or even that they were much interested in their members' graves at all – and the respective numbers of known Christian and pagan graves would be highly unbalanced if all early gallery systems generally held to be Christian would stand up to the claim.

These doubts are well founded and can be taken further (Borg 2013). Interestingly, most of the later catacombs like Praetextatus, Domitilla, Marcellinus and Petrus, or Sebastian, are situated on imperial property previously used for the burial of imperial slaves and freedmen. One of the Praetextatus galleries (Area E) was used by an association of imperial cooks (Spera 2004, 143; Figure 19.6). Moreover, the size of these galleries and the pattern of their extension differ markedly from the few hypogea that are more firmly attested as Christian cemeteries, such as Area I in Callixtus, established by the later bishop of Rome on the initiative of his predecessor Zephyrinus (Fiocchi Nicolai and Guyon 2006), but probably also Calepodio (Granelli 2006) and Novatianus (Rocco 2006). The latter are markedly smaller, and none of their pre-Constantinian extensions surpass the boundaries of the burial precinct within which they were established, while the former extend rather ramblingly within the wide area of the imperial estate. Most likely, similar patterns apply to burial grounds established by the Roman aristocracy, such as the nuclei of the later Priscilla catacomb (Tolotti 1970), which are probably located on the estate of the distinguished Acilii family. It is thus highly likely that the early gallery systems of the later catacombs were used for the burial of slaves and freedmen of the emperor and prominent families, though certainly not exclusively so. As had previously been the case with areas above ground, outsiders must have been able to acquire burial space within these cemeteries as well.

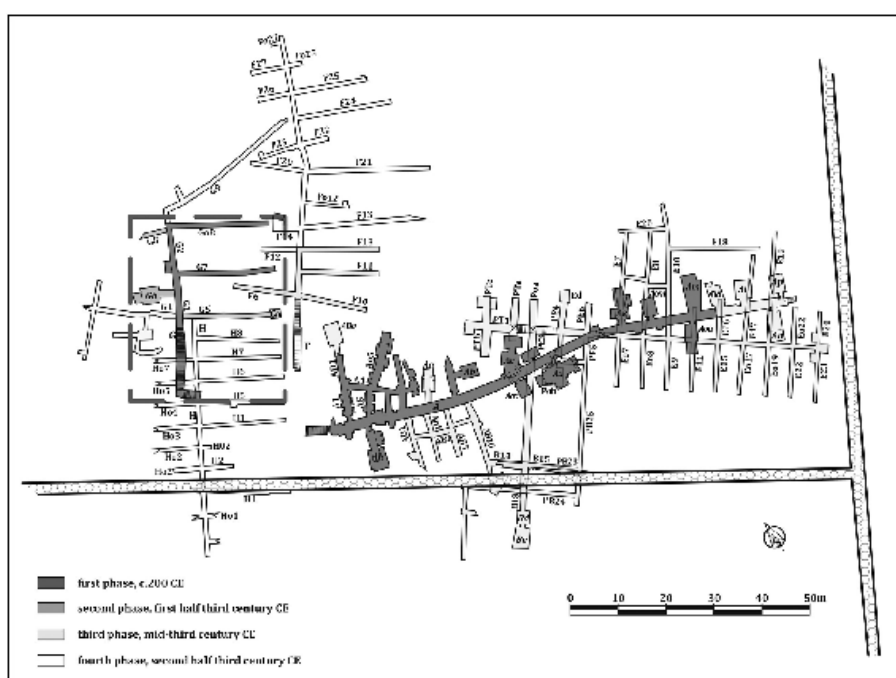


Figure 19.6 Plan of the pre-Constantinian galleries of the later Praetextatus Catacomb. Drawing B.E. Borg.

This proposition finds support in the epigraphic evidence. While inscriptions from equestrian and senatorial tombs continue on approximately the same scale through to the end of the third century (a full survey is lacking, cf. Faßbender 2005), epitaphs of freedmen, which make up the vast majority of inscriptions from the late first century BCE to the early third, almost cease after the Severan period even though their class and the mutual obligations between them and their patrons continued to exist (Gerhardt 2008, 783–5). Some members of this class probably erected the small late “house” tombs on the Appian Way (Spera 1999, 98–109 UUTT 148–72; 118–23 UUTT 182–6; 238–9 UT 386C), and similar ones elsewhere. Others may well have been buried in the tombs of their non-aristocratic patrons, or in other tombs that had become available to them through a liberalization of laws on burial rights (Kaser 1975, 244–5). But it is equally likely that a large percentage of members of this class was buried in the newly developing tunnel systems.

The later Roman cemeteries of Ostia, the port of Rome (with Portus), closely related to the capital in various respects, indicate that new surface tombs, especially the more elaborate ones, became dominated by the social élite. Most third-century tombs were erected for equestrians and other local dignitaries (Heinzelmann 2000). Equestrians also seem to be the main users of a new type of monument, huge marble sarcophagi often with large inscriptions, which were displayed in the open-air, sometimes elevated on high pedestals. There are examples from Ostia, but the best known of all is the

so-called “Tomba di Nerone” on the Via Cassia dating from around 260/70 CE (Figure 19.7). It was erected for P. Vibius Marianus, a knight who had enjoyed a meteoric career in the mid-third century, by his daughter, who had herself managed to marry into the senatorial order (Equini Schneider 1984).

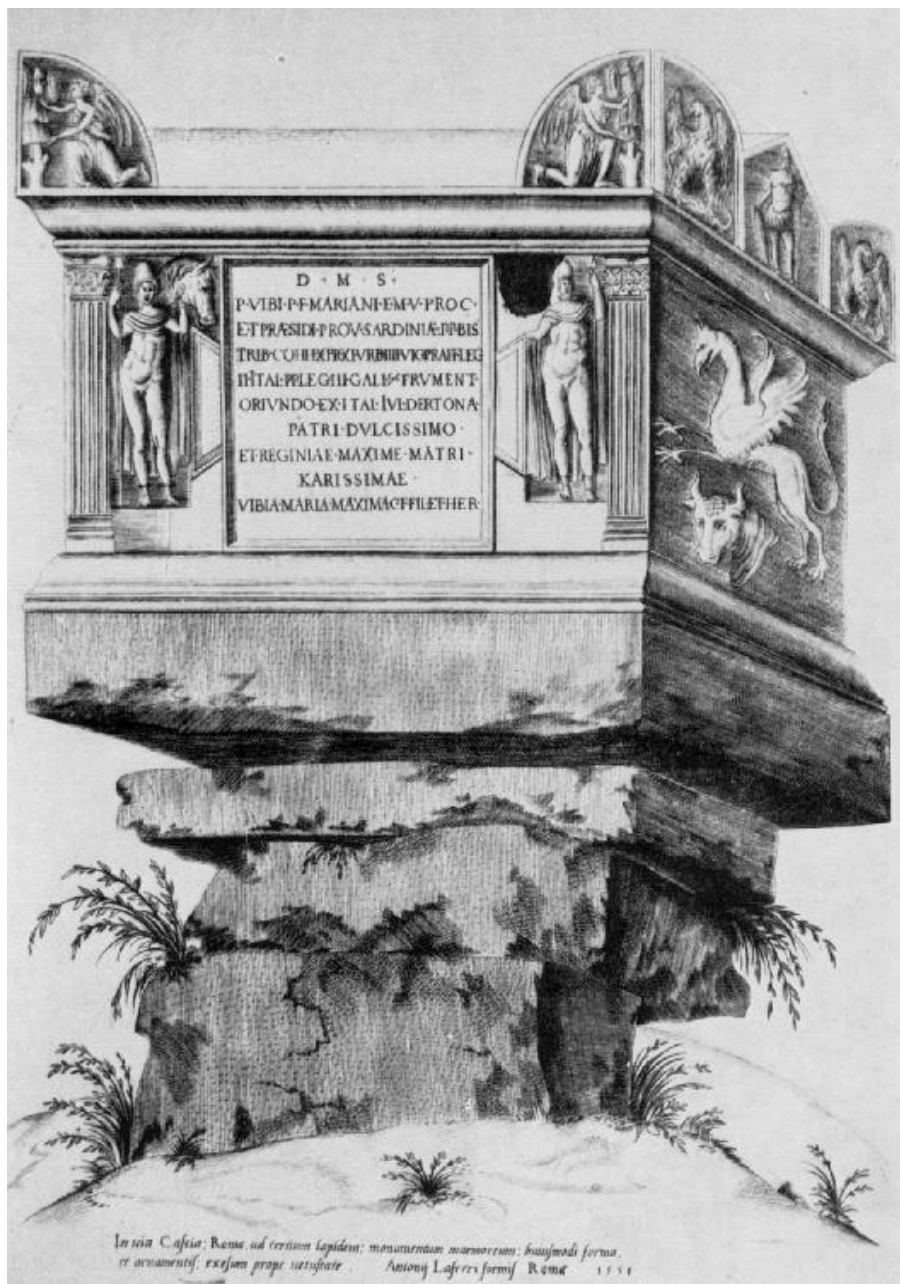


Figure 19.7 The so-called Tomba di Nerone on the Via Cassia, erected for P. Vibius Marianus, a knight who made a steep career and whose daughter, the donor of the monument, had even managed to marry into the *ordo senatorius*.

The most ambitious and wealthy members of society continued to erect temple tombs at least until the mid-third century, attested by inscribed senatorial epistyle blocks, and they also introduced new tomb types such as the round and cruciform mausolea, which became more common in late antiquity (Borg 2013, 48 UUTT 57). An impressive example of the latter type, demonstrating that many features of the fourth century had already been introduced during the experimental third century, was documented by Pirro Ligorio and Sallustio Peruzzi in the cemetery of SS. Marcellinus and Petrus on the Via Labicana, where the lower part of its semi-interred burial chamber is still preserved (Guyon 1987, 21 UUTT 9; Rausa 1997, 111–13 no. 24). The building, measuring 17 × 11 meters, was erected upon a high travertine podium, decorated with four cornices at different heights and with triangular pediments above rectangular protrusions on all four sides. It was accessed by a flight of stairs leading to a colonnaded porch. The building's upper chamber was cruciform and cross-vaulted but is now lost. The semi-interred burial chamber, accessed through a vestibule, was circular and had deep niches for sarcophagi on three sides. Both the vestibule and the burial chamber were adorned with black and white mosaic floors and painted walls.

The present account cannot do justice to the wide range of tomb and cemetery types, and the wealth of information on the social history of Rome they hold. But two main trends should have become clear. The first is a desire, from the late second century BCE to the end of the Severan era (240s CE), to use tombs as monuments to their patrons, honoring and commemorating members of an increasing range of social groups, who advertised their achievements to different audiences depending on their wealth and status. Changes during this period, especially after the Augustan era, mainly concern the forms of display, not the general attitudes. The second trend, during the third century, is an increasing gap between the continued use of tombs for self-representation by the social (and possibly financial) élite, and the majority of people who were buried in communal tombs and extended tunnel systems, which provided for their commemoration (at least ideally) but held only limited scope for self-display.

Many questions remain open, however. Some are of a more technical nature, like the identification and dating of third-century tombs. Ludger Rutgers and colleagues have successfully tested ¹⁴C-isotope dating of charcoal collected from the plaster with which the *loculi* were sealed, a method that might be applicable more widely (Rutgers and Van der Borg 2007). Others concern historical interpretations. When monumental tombs were largely limited to *liberti* and their first-generation descendants, and the social élite, where and how were the ordinary free-born citizens buried? It is only more recently that cemeteries with simpler graves are being excavated and documented carefully, e.g. at Osteria del Curato (Egidi, Catalano, and Spadoni 2003) or

Vallerano (Bedini, Testa, and Catalano 1995; cf. Graham 2006). Where and how did the emperor and wealthy families bury their slaves? After all, in contrast to the *liberti* and some *equites*, members of the senatorial order never admitted their *familia* into their own tombs. What exactly happened to the *liberti* in the third century? Did they, finally, become uninterested in self-representation? Or were they, differently from the élite, hit hard by the economic crisis and could no longer afford lavish tombs? What exactly is the range of social groups buried in the later catacombs? Can forensic methods and DNA-testing help to solve some of these problems (cf. Spera 1999, 63–4 UT 73, where two social groups in one tomb are distinguished by their diet)? Roman tombs appear so well known and researched but much work still remains to be done. It is worth its while, since few Roman contexts hold a similar potential for a better understanding of Roman ideologies, attitudes, and value systems.

Guide to Further Reading

References given in the text refer to the most comprehensive and/or most recent publications on the subject. Some of the argument is based on research on which I shall give a more detailed account in a forthcoming book, and for the third century see Borg 2013. Important general reading on Roman tombs – though covering the entire Roman empire rather than Rome alone – include Toynbee 1971, Hesberg 1992, and Petersen 2006. The latter is also the most recent and comprehensive publication on Roman freedmen tombs. Meinecke 2014 focusses on sarcophagi and their archaeological context, but also provides a convenient catalogue of often little-known tomb contexts from the archaic period to the third century CE. The majority of scholarship on Roman tombs and cemeteries is in Italian and German, but the following English-language publications cover a lot of ground: Bodel 2008 is important on both *columbaria* and catacombs and offers a wealth of insights. Fiocchi Nicolai, Bisconti, and Mazzoleni 1999 present the more traditional view on catacombs and many excellent illustrations. Thomas 2007, 183–200 discusses temple tombs and offers some thought-provoking ideas though contains a number of factual errors. Graham 2006 is excellent on graves of the poor. On the Roman funerary landscape see e.g. Purcell 1987. For individual monuments or cemeteries see also Claridge 2010, Coarelli 2007 (both English), *LTUR*, and *LTURS*.

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PART VII

THE URBAN ECONOMY

CHAPTER TWENTY

The Labor Market¹

Laurens E. Tacoma

Introduction

By the time of Augustus, Rome had in every sense of the word become a cosmopolis. It was a very populous city and its population had to be fed, housed, and clothed on a massive scale, the wealthy elite had to be supplied with whatever it fancied, and then there were the imperial building projects of staggering size. The high volume of production implies a large demand for labor, of a wide variety. The sources attest to an enormous range of economic activities: from making jewelry to unloading the boats coming from Ostia at the Tiber quays, to waiting on the table of a senator.

Given the wide range of activities, it is hardly surprising that Rome's labor market was complex. Six characteristics immediately strike the eye. In the first place, and somewhat paradoxically, much of the urban production was small-scale. Aggregate levels of production were high, but much of the urban labor was carried out in small workplaces that functioned also as shops (though see Flohr 2013 for other production forms). Even the large imperial building projects appear to have been subcontracted to smaller workforces (Brunt 1980). Second, although the demand for labor was high, it is an open question whether it was sufficient to supply an income for all. The free grain distributions clearly were meant to cushion the uncertainties of the free market. Third, much of the labor was carried out by slaves and freedmen. The exact proportion between free and servile labor is hotly debated and is in all likelihood beyond recovery. There is however no doubt that the size of the servile population was large. In the fourth place much of Rome's population will have consisted of newcomers. Again, the exact proportions of such migrants relative to the Rome-born population is difficult to establish (and depends on definitions), but it is clear that migrants can be found among all social groups of Rome (Noy 2000; Holleran 2011). Fifth, it seems likely that many jobs were held on a temporal basis. Some occupations would be subject to seasonal variation, many other jobs were held for longer but finite periods (Erdkamp 2008, 420–37). Lastly, a significant part of the urban economy was structured around the elite *domus*, the complex, large households where hundreds of slaves and freedmen were working for the senatorial elite (Treggiari 1973; Hasegawa 2005).

These characteristics raise a series of questions about the nature of labor in

Rome: about the organization of labor, the openness of the labor market and the extent of labor mobility. Most fundamentally, to what extent is it legitimate to speak of a labor market at all, in which supply and demand of labor could meet unhindered? These questions underlie the analysis of this chapter on labor in Rome. For the Romans, work covered a very wide set of activities, ranging from unpaid activity in homes to salaried positions in the bureaucracy. Here, the focus is on the labor of the masses in the early imperial period, on the people below the elite, who worked in the civilian sphere, outside the imperial bureaucracy or the army. This is not to suggest that other areas of the urban economy were unimportant, but the subject is already large as it is, and there can be little doubt that the majority of the population found employment here.

Sources and Methods

Before the analysis starts, a sketch of the possibilities and impossibilities is necessary, for the questions posed in the introduction cannot be answered in a straightforward way (Garnsey 1980, 43–5).

It is not that sources are lacking. We have statements in Roman authors about attitudes to labor, we have various snippets in Latin and Greek literature about particular jobs, epigraphy supplies numerous attestations of a wide range of occupations and information about *collegia*, the legal sources help to explain the institutional organization of work and offer vignettes of actual practices, archaeology supplies information about the commercial infrastructure and production techniques, and then there are depictions of work scenes on epitaphs, and, less frequently, on building decoration and frescos. Given the usual dearth of ancient sources, the material to study labor is actually quite good.

However, for all their richness, the sources do not cover all parts of the subject equally well and need context and interpretation. Elite attitudes have often formed the starting-point for discussions of labor, but it is an open question to what extent the moral taxonomy of acceptable and non-acceptable economic behavior penetrated lower down the social scale (Treggiari 1980, 48–9 with further refs). The evidence about professional *collegia* is certainly important, but next to nothing is known about their economic functioning, and according to most scholars this silence reflects reality: the main function of the *collegia* was social (Perry 2011). The occupational inscriptions are biased towards skilled artisans, and come in large numbers from the *columbaria*, the tombs that members of the elite created for their slaves and freedmen (Treggiari 1973; Joshel 1992). The legal infrastructure of the urban economy was certainly well-developed, but it is precisely the level of sophistication that raises classic problems of the sociology of law: can artisans be supposed to be

versed in the legal niceties of a concept like *imperitia* (inexperience) in the *locatio conductio* contracts that they were supposed to conclude (Martin 2001)?

Nevertheless, several observations can be made immediately. The care with which scenes, objects and tools are depicted and the specificity with which jobs are mentioned in the epitaphs and reliefs is remarkable. The implication must be that, for the people under consideration, jobs could function as a primary marker of identity (Joshel 1992). In that sense, many sources reflect a positive attitude towards labor that is plainly at odds with elite prejudices against work. It also becomes immediately apparent that the range of jobs was virtually infinite and covered an enormous range. In the city of Rome, at least 160 different occupations are attested in the inscriptions alone (Treggiari 1980, 56 with appendix).

But it is difficult to advance beyond these simple observations. To be sure, there are many possibilities for further analysis: it is possible to analyze the structure of particular sectors of the economy, the existence of occupational hierarchies, the degree of segmentation of the urban economy, and the degree of specialization (Doorn 1993). Nevertheless, a fundamental problem remains. The high number of jobs has been noted by many scholars, but it has led to radically different interpretations. On the one hand, the large occupational differentiation has been interpreted as a sign of specialization and economic complexity. On the other hand, given the fact that many of the occupations belong to the servile population of elite households, it has also been interpreted as a sign of conspicuous consumption, connected to the elite ideal of self-sufficiency and the social imperative to display wealth.

Given the uncertainties about the interpretation, any straightforward analysis of occupational lists is likely to lead into a blind alley. In order to take the interpretation of the Roman labor market further, a different route has to be followed. Four basic dichotomies that have often structured scholarly analysis will be subjected to further scrutiny in the four succeeding sections: that between servile and free labor, that between skilled and unskilled labor, that between male and female labor, and that between dependent and independent labor.

Servile and Free Labor

Slavery used to be seen as *the* fundamental institute of the Roman economy. It was assumed that the servile population (of both slaves and freedmen) dominated urban labor. Such a dominance may have had extremely important economic repercussions. It may have blocked important avenues to freeborn people looking for work (Noy 2000, 88–9), and ultimately may have resulted

in an idle population completely dependent on grain distributions. At a more general level, the availability of cheap slave labor would have blocked technological progress, for there would be little incentive to use labor-saving devices. It would also have blocked the emergence of a labor market in the technical sense of the term: an open, integrated market where supply of labor and demand for labor would meet through price-setting mechanisms. In recent years all these ideas have come under attack (Temin 2003/4).

The extent to which servile labor dominated the economy was in the first place dependent on the prominence of the servile population in the urban economy: put simply, the size of the group. The proportions of slaves, freed, and free among the population of Rome are by and large unrecoverable, but on any estimate the servile part of the population was large. Slaves formed a substantial part of the population, with guesstimates running as high as 33 %. But the key lies perhaps not so much in estimating the size of the servile population, but rather in evaluating the role of the free population. The sources clearly show freeborn people in significant numbers at work. In fact this is not really surprising, given the fact that the grain dole only supplied part of the income of a selected part of the freeborn population. Most free people must have found a (supplementary) income through work. Whatever the proportions, the labor force will therefore have consisted of both significant numbers of freeborn people and significant numbers of slaves and freedmen.

In addition, epigraphic and other sources abundantly show that slaves and free persons performed the same types of work. Occupations attested in the inscriptions or other written evidence appear to have been held by the servile and free population indiscriminately. This applies even to relatively high-ranking occupations, such as that of architect (Brunt 1980, 82). Conversely, free persons performed functions that we might in a Roman context intuitively associate with servile labor, such as wet-nursing (Bradley 1991, 13–75).

The functional equivalence of slave and free labor squares ill with the notion that slaves dominated the urban economy. The similar occupations of the servile and freeborn population have led in recent years to the reverse argument that slavery was *not* an economic institute. The distinction between slavery and freedom certainly was of fundamental importance to Roman society, but it was of a social and legal, not of an economic kind (Bradley 1994, 65; Temin 2003/4, 515, 529). In consequence, slavery should be regarded merely as a specific (though rather peculiar) type of labor relation, at one end of a spectrum of possibilities.

Although in a general sense this series of arguments seems correct, they also call for closer analysis. The sources certainly show that the freeborn and servile population served in similar economic roles in the city of Rome, but some separation can also be surmised, partly attested, partly outside the sources. In this context, the fact that stories circulated about voluntary slavery

is certainly relevant (Ramin and Veyne 1981).

Domestics in close personal service in elite *domus* are likely to have consisted exclusively of slaves (Maxey 1938, 5). It is difficult to imagine a *nomenclator*, a *ministrator* (table-servant) or a *pedisequus* (attendant) as freeborn. Then, there is evidence of slave gangs used for regular maintenance of state projects. In the case of the aqueducts, major projects would be contracted out, but there were also two permanent gangs employed consisting in total of 700 slaves (Frontin. *Aq.* 96–101, 116–19). Connected to the existence of such gangs, dirty, dangerous or laborious tasks were presumably carried out by slaves. For example, the people running treadmills of the type depicted on the monument of the Haterii (Galli and Pisani Sartorio 2009, 93) are unlikely to have been anything other than slaves. It is also telling that other mechanic devices that needed muscle power could be driven both by humans and animals interchangeably. In all such cases, it seems rather unlikely that free persons would voluntarily sign up for such jobs, at least not in significant numbers. As some of the examples also show, the numbers of slaves involved could be large. Lastly, it is also significant that all of the examples of exclusive economic domains concern the servile population. In the case of the free population, the only area that was exclusively their preserve was the army (Bradley 1994, 65). In consequence, it seems likely that some areas of the urban economy did remain confined to servile labor.

Servile and free labor are thus best seen as structurally equivalent but *imperfect* substitutes. The servile population probably dominated some areas of economic life. In many others there was free choice between the types of laborers.

Skilled and Unskilled Labor

A second categorization is also often used in the analysis: that between skilled and unskilled labor. This categorization is to some extent an analytical one, for in reality a spectrum rather than a strict dichotomy will have existed: within the group of skilled workers there existed a large variety of skills and experience; there were also people we should call semi-skilled workers, and people might themselves move through the spectrum, by learning on the job.

It is important to realize that much of the evidence we have for labor is biased towards the skilled part of the labor force. In particular, the occupational inscriptions and reliefs are heavily biased towards the arts and crafts, though unskilled workers are also attested. It is perhaps also relevant that of the people buried in the elite *columbaria* an occupation is mentioned for only about a quarter, which may (but need not necessarily) imply that the rest

formed an unskilled workforce of a more flexible nature (Hasegawa 2005, 30).

There is also a serious possibility that the character of unskilled labor was quite different from skilled labor in other respects. Much unskilled work will have been casual labor: it was of a temporal nature, and it is also likely that the demand for casual labor was subject to seasonal variation (Frontin. *Aq.* 122–3, for building). This might have attracted different types of laborers, for example people from the Italian countryside who wanted to supplement their income (Erdkamp 2008).

The fact that the unskilled are under-represented in the sources, and that casual labor is ephemeral, makes quantification of proportions of skilled to unskilled work extremely difficult. Of course, the enormous amount of muscle-power involved in building and transport implies in itself a large unskilled labor force. For some of the individual sectors of the urban economy or for particular projects it is possible to come up with estimates. Unloading the ships coming from Ostia at the Tiber quays may have offered permanent employment to some 3,000 persons (Aldrete and Mattingly 1999, 197). Of the 6,000–10,000 persons estimated to be necessary to build the Baths of Caracalla, about half would be unskilled or semi-skilled. The same site also serves as a reminder that many of the large imperial building projects were built on artificially created terraces for which enormous amounts of earth were moved without any mechanical aid (DeLaine 2000, 129–31). But more general evaluations are hindered by other considerations: there is somewhat more evidence for lifting devices than is often admitted (Galli and Pisani Sartorio 2009), some of the required muscle power was that of animals, not slaves, and the concept of labor-saving was not completely alien to Roman minds (Brunt 1980, 83). Furthermore, even in sectors where large workforces were required, many of the workers appear to have been skilled. So in the estimates just mentioned for the Baths of Caracalla, the other half of the 6,000–10,000 employed consisted of skilled workers. All we can say is that in the case of Rome, an unknown but significant part of the population is likely to have been engaged in unskilled labor.

In trying to conceptualize the other end of the spectrum of possibilities, that of skilled labor, the main question is who had access to training and in what form. It is often thought that slaves were in a better position to obtain a training and that this is part of the explanation of their ambiguous position: on the one hand they had the lowest status in society, on the other they could experience real social mobility upon manumission thanks to the skills acquired during slavery. It seems however more likely that both slaves and freeborn had access to training in equal measures.

People, both free and unfree, started to work from an early age onwards. There are quite a number of epitaphs for children with an occupational title (Bradley 1991, 115–16). Many occupations were inherited from father to son,

even in the case of slaves. There are epitaphs for young children with depictions of the tools of the job of their father, or depictions of tools that do not refer to specific members of a family (e.g. Zimmer 1982, no. 105). In many such cases, the training of the children is likely to have been informal. Children would start by helping their father and gradually acquire the necessary skills.

Some of the education might be formalized. There is no intrinsic reason to assume that the apprenticeship system attested in Egypt and to a more limited extent elsewhere (e.g. Lucian, *The dream*) did not function in a similar way in Rome. As it is known from Roman Egypt, the system concerned both free persons and slaves alike (which incidentally forms an additional argument to equate the economic roles of slaves and free persons). Apprentices started around age 12 to 14; an age at which it can be assumed that children did not make their own choices. Apprenticeships could take anything from 6 months up to 6 years. Even in cases where fathers/owners held the same occupation, children and slaves could still be apprenticed outside the own household (Forbes 1955, 328–35; Bradley 1991, 107–12).

It thus seems that the possibilities to acquire training were relatively large, for both the servile population and free population alike. All this required of course an investment that some people were not prepared or able to make: not every family could miss the labor of a child. The fact that training was available does not imply that everybody obtained one. Many people would end up among the unskilled. At the same time, it is clear that no equation between slave and skilled work, or free and unskilled work can be made. Both categories can be found in both groups.

Male and Female Labor

A third distinction concerns male and female labor. Many discussions of labor implicitly focus on men. However, there is quite some evidence for working women. They constitute a significant minority in the sources (Treggiari 1979a, b; Kampen 1981, 107–29 with catalogue III; Hasegawa 2005, 32). Their position on the labor market is of real interest. However, it is difficult to get beyond the simple observation that working women occurred among the labor force. What complicates matters is that within the already biased sources additional gender biases may have been at work. There is, therefore, a real possibility that working women are under-represented.

One important question is to what extent the labor market consisted of separate domains for men and women. That some gendered separation existed causes little surprise. It seems likely that certain sectors of the urban economy

were closed to women, most notably those unskilled jobs that required muscle power. Women will not have been working in significant numbers in the building or transport industry. Predictably, women are found mostly in the domestic sphere, as child nurses, or in textile production (Pomeroy 1975, 191). At the same time, what constitutes this domestic sphere turns out to be quite large, extending to midwives and female physicians. Then, there are also jobs that fall under any definition outside it. Some were of the disreputable type, such as inn-keepers, or prostitutes. But there is also a host of other occupations attested, some of them in areas that one would associate with the male domain. The fact that several reliefs show them at work excludes the possibility that the actual work was delegated to men. Conversely, many jobs within the domestic domain were not monopolized by women. The case of male child nurses is the best example (Bradley 1991, 37–75), but one might also point to men working in textile production. Given the fact that in many societies a strict separation into male and female domains occurs, the fact that in Rome the boundaries were vague and permeable is more remarkable than the fact that they existed.

However, there might have been a difference between the free and the servile population. The jobs just mentioned were held both by freeborn women and by women of the servile population. Nevertheless, it is clear that a disproportionately large amount of the attested cases of working women concerns the servile population. This revives in a somewhat different form the question addressed earlier, on the extent to which slave and free labor were substitutes.

The position of female slaves seems relatively unambiguous: they had to work, and they seem to have remained at work during their slave marriage and after manumission. But it is noteworthy that some of them, relatively more than male slaves, did not have a formal occupation. Presumably they were part of a flexible workforce (Hasegawa 2005, 32). On the other hand it need not be forgotten that in a slave system that was at least partly based on slave breeding, many women will have been engaged in just that: breeding slaves.

What applies to the acquisition of skills mentioned earlier applies to female slaves as well. The evidence from Egypt suggests that slave women could be and were apprenticed. In Rome much of the education could in addition also have taken place within elite households. The evidence from the apprenticeship contracts suggests at the same time that the range of skills women acquired is likely to have been more limited than that of men.

The position of free women is more ambiguous. Elite disdain for working women among the lower classes is well-known: they were usually classified as (akin to) prostitutes and slaves (Pomeroy 1974, 190–204; Treggiari 1979a, b). If elite ideology had any effect lower down the social scale, it would have resulted in a prejudice against free working women, with detrimental effects both on their possibilities to work and to their identification with it. At the

same time, it seems likely that no matter what ideological preferences prevailed, economic necessity might have forced many women to work anyway.

In this context, the ability of women to receive training is relevant. Free women are by and large absent from the Egyptian apprenticeship contracts (Bradley 1991, 108). It is certainly significant that women married young; around the same time that apprenticeships were concluded. Marriage is likely to have impeded receiving an education outside the new home and in that sense have served as a barrier to work. At the same time, this increases the likelihood that newlywed young women received a more informal training within marriage, and that as a consequence this training focused more on activities of the new household, including, but not exclusively consisting of, domestic roles.

It seems, therefore, intrinsically likely that many women worked in a subsidiary role next to their husbands. This is confirmed by the sources, which show a number of cases of women who worked alongside their husbands without mentioning an occupation, and/or were in a subordinate position, assisting their husbands with whatever was at hand (see Zimmer 1982; Groen-Vallinga 2013).

If anything is clear, it is that the position of working women was ambiguous. The labor market was dominated by men in more than one way. But women clearly also occupied a significant niche. In a sense, this rephrases the problem: why was female work sometimes formalized into what was regarded as an occupation, and why were their roles sometimes subsumed in those of the husband?

Dependence and Independence

A last distinction often used is that between dependent and independent labor. We may posit the existence of a spectrum of possible labor relations running from complete dependence to complete independence. It is clear that in the case of Rome all varieties along the spectrum can be found.

At one end of the spectrum of possible labor relations, the case of complete dependency is relatively clear. It is confined to slaves (and therefore has been discussed above from a somewhat different perspective). Some slaves were completely subjected to the control of their masters, who would tell them what to do, and gave them the most degrading types of work, requiring little to no skill. An example would be a slave in the treadmill, or in the mill of a baker, or female slaves set to work in a brothel, or the slave gangs used for

cleaning the aqueducts or the sewers. As such work was hardly subject to positive self-identification, it has left few traces in the sources, at least not by the actors themselves. The types of work associated with complete dependency might have been used as a direct punishment to unruly slaves, or simply been given to slaves thought unfit for other work. Although in the absence of adequate sources one can only hazard guesses, it seems a fair bet that whereas this type of labor relation certainly occurred in Rome, it was more widespread outside urban contexts, at the large slave-run *latifundia* and the mines (Bradley 1994, 71–2).

At the opposite extreme the situation of complete independence is also clear. By definition it was confined to freeborn people, for even the most independent freedman at least still had the stigma of his former slave status attached to him. No doubt among the many freeborn people that are attested in the occupational inscriptions (Zimmer 1982, 6) a part, if not all, operated independent of anyone else. A large group will have consisted of freeborn artisans working and selling goods in the workshops that dotted the urban landscape.

The situation at either end of the spectrum is relatively clear, but many people will have found themselves somewhere in-between these two outer ends, in some form of dependency. The type of these dependent ties could however vary greatly. Not all have left in equal measure traces in the sources, and in consequence we should look at the subject from different angles and discuss a number of seemingly unrelated topics: interference of the state in the urban economy, ties of dependence among the servile population, hired labor, and the position of business managers.

Through its indirect interventions in the economy the state created ties of dependence. The emperors gave some thought to providing people an income through work; at least this was one consideration in the creation of the almost continuous series of imperial building projects in the city. A small vignette is offered by the famous passage in Suetonius, where Vespasian rejects the invention of a labor saving device with the comment that he has to feed his people (Suet. *Vesp.* 18). The implications of the passage have been hotly debated (Casson 1978 and Brunt 1980), but no matter whether some sort of policy can be read into it, it is important to realize that in creating work, the state operated mostly indirectly, because it seems to have contracted out work in smaller parts to *redemptores*, who were supposed to bring in their own workforce. In consequence, a vast hierarchical network of labor ties was created by the imperial projects.

In a different vein, the state also intervened indirectly in the urban economy through its distributions of free grain (Jongman and Dekker 1989). As was stated above, the dole did not alleviate the need to work at all. At the same time, many freeborn people will have become dependent for a part of their livelihood on the distributions, among them many of the independently

working craftsmen that were just mentioned (who in consequence might not have been as independent as they appear).

In thinking about ties of moderate dependency, we should again consider the servile population. It is a well-known characteristic of Roman slavery that many urban slaves were not completely dependent on the whims of their master, but had much room for maneuver. The fact that many were skilled is in themselves already significant, for training created knowledge that was partly outside the control of the supervisor. Moreover, many sources testify to the remarkable degree of freedom that some urban slaves had.

It is equally remarkable that freedmen, who by definition had much more room for maneuver than slaves, very often remained circling around their former master (Mouritsen 2011). There is a natural and understandable tendency by modern observers to see manumission as the major event in the life of a Roman slave, for it led to the subsequent integration of the freedman into the world of citizens. But it seems that in many cases a change of legal status had few economic repercussions. It is improbable that many freedmen changed their occupation upon manumission, and some simply remained in the service of their former master. Nor do we hear of former slaves starting a new life elsewhere. It is telling that the *columbaria* of the *domus* were occupied by slaves and freedmen alike. In some cases the obligations to the former master were formalized in claims to *operae libertorum*, work that had to be performed for free to the master. In a more general sense an ideology of loyalty pervaded the relation between freedman and patron – loyalty was expected through the legal requirement of *obsequium*, but inscriptions set up by grateful freedmen for their deceased patrons show that it was also internalized.

One other relevant issue is that of hired labor. Although higher up the social scale, somewhat different arrangements could be used (Lucian, *On working in great houses*, Corbier 1980), normally *mercenarii* were employed, people who hired out their labor. Conditions could vary, from informal oral agreements to perform a specific task or work for a specified number of days to written *locatio conductio* contracts. Conditions could be very hard, especially for the day laborers. Work not done was work not paid for, and often the work was dangerous (Treggiari 1978; 1980).

The relative silence of the sources about hired labor hinders judgments on the extent to which it occurred. Many forms of hired labor were ephemeral and have left little trace in the sources (Mrozek 1986). It seems likely that many of the large state projects were based on such labor (Brunt 1980), and it is certainly also significant that hired labor could concern slaves, freedmen, and freeborn alike. Slaves could and did work as hired laborers under exactly the same conditions as other laborers (though the wage might have gone to the master). Elite prejudice to working for others was high: it was famously equated to slavery (Cic. *Off.* 1.150–51; Lucian, *On working in great houses*).

Ironically, in a sense that may not have been wide of the mark, for it is likely that many freeborn people did in fact work in the service of others alongside slaves and freedmen.

In that respect the figure of the *institor* is also of importance (Aubert 1994). An *institor* was someone who was in charge of a business owned by someone else. The concept of indirect agency was widely applied and could comprise practically any economic activity. It was not only used for the wealthier people, but also at quite modest economic levels of society. It is telling that again it could be used for men, women, slave, freed, and free alike. It was in other words not merely slaves and freedmen who were under the direct control of their masters.

The various forms of dependency are perhaps best shown in the many workshops that dotted the city. It is clear from inscriptions that many free workers worked side by side with freedmen and slaves, and in many respects there existed no clear distinction between employer and employee (Treggiari 1980, 52). What is more, as we have seen, some employers will have been independent owners of the shops, but many others were not. There can be no doubt that at least some of the workshops were owned by wealthier members of the population who set up their *institores* there.

Thus, dependency played a large role in structuring labor relations. We should conceptualize a large part of the working population enmeshed in webs of hierarchically structured relations. Some of these were formalized, others left open.

Conclusion: An Open Labor Market?

By way of conclusion, and looking from a somewhat different angle at the subject, it is legitimate to ask to what extent we can speak of an open labor market, in which supply and demand of labor met without impediments. Can we draw a balance-sheet?

Several factors point to openness. As by now will be clear, slave and free labor were in many respects structural equivalents, which implies that the pervasiveness of slavery does not in itself constitute an argument against the openness of the labor market. Economically, many slaves behaved in the same way as free persons. Second, there existed no real obstacles to the acquisition of skills. Just as slaves could and often did get an education through their masters, so the freeborn could receive a training either inside the familial home or outside it. Third, women seem to have participated in a relatively wide range of economic activities. They certainly operated well beyond the

narrow confines of the domestic activities traditionally assigned to them. Lastly, hired labor was an important form of labor. Hired labor is conducive of relatively high levels of labor mobility.

But there are also several factors that point in the opposite direction, to a not fully functioning labor market. In the first place, slave and free formed only imperfect substitutes: some sectors of the economy remained in the hands of the servile population. In the second place, the availability of training does not imply that education was available for everybody with talent: money and tradition remained of paramount importance. Third, women participated in a wide range of economic activities, but they certainly did not enjoy complete freedom. Last, and most importantly, many working people were enmeshed in ties of dependency. Many free workers relied on supplementary income through the dole. Some were in various ways dependent on members of the elite, or, indirectly, on the emperor.

The outcome, then, is mixed. How the balance is drawn obviously depends on the weight assigned to the individual arguments. But rather than choosing between either option, it is perhaps better to speak of an imperfect labor market. This raises the issue whether full openness is to be expected: it has been argued that market imperfections are a standard feature of pre-industrial societies (Temin 2003/4; cf. Pleket 1988; Bang 2007). Be that as it may, from the discussion it is also clear that simple statements cannot do justice to the complexities of Roman labor relations. The labor market was not dominated by slaves, the unskilled did not consist completely of the free poor, women were not completely confined to domestic roles, most slaves were not in complete subjection to their masters. If anything, complexity rather than transparency forms the hallmark of the Roman labor market.

Guide to Further Reading

Though its potential value for discussions of the Roman economy, migration history and gender studies is difficult to miss, there are few overviews of Roman labor. Important exceptions are Brunt (1980) and a host of articles by Treggiari published in the 1970s and 1980s, though in all cases only parts of the subject are covered and substantial previous knowledge is supposed. Apart from these, an excellent and balanced introduction from a somewhat different angle forms the chapter on slave labor in Bradley (1994, 57–81). Temin (2003/4) forms an important if polemical contribution to the same subject. Mouritsen (2011) is of importance for understanding the position of freedmen. Joshel (1992) has studied the occupational inscriptions mainly from the point of identity and representation. Hasegawa (2005) is a very useful study of the

columbaria. Kampen (1981) (though strictly speaking on Ostia, not Rome) has raised numerous issues relating to women's work. A series of papers by J. DeLaine has elucidated labor relations in the building industry – a subject of particular importance in evaluating unskilled labor. The difficulties faced by immigrants entering Rome's labor market are discussed by Holleran 2011. Flohr 2013 in his discussion of fulleries shows the possibilities of using archaeological evidence for analyzing labor. A collection of essays entitled *Work, labor and professions in the Roman World* edited by K. Verboven and C. Laes was published in 2017.

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ENDNOTE

1. My thanks to Giuseppe Dari-Mattiacci, Miriam Groen-Vallinga, and Claire Holleran for suggesting improvements in content and style. The present chapter incorporates material used in Tacoma [2016](#).

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

Production in Rome

Dennis Kehoe

By the time of Augustus, Rome had become the largest city in the ancient world, with a population of about one million (see Lo Cascio, [Chapter 6](#) in this volume). Rome was larger than the other giant cities in the Roman empire, such as Alexandria, whose population was in the order of five hundred thousand (Rathbone [2007](#), 706; Manning [2003](#), 47–8; Wilson [2011](#)), as well as Carthage and Antioch, each with several hundred thousand inhabitants. Rome was thus not only a giant by ancient standards; it was larger than any European city until London and Paris attained similar populations at the beginning of the nineteenth century (Scheidel [2007](#), 78). In addition, Rome’s surrounding territory, or *suburbium*, was densely settled, with perhaps half again the population of the city itself within a 50-kilometer radius (Witcher [2005](#)). So at the time of Augustus, Rome and its suburbs had perhaps 1.5 million people, or as much as one-quarter of the population of Italy. This degree of urbanization was greater than in the empire as a whole, and would later be matched in the early modern Netherlands, where about 24 % of the population lived in cities of 10,000 or more (Maddison [2007](#), 40–43).

The sheer size of Rome surely entailed profound economic changes both for Italy and the empire as a whole. Rome’s growth formed part of a broader phenomenon of urbanism in the Roman empire (Wilson [2009](#), 74; 2011). Rome’s economy was to a large extent fueled by the consumption needs of a large elite class. This included 500–600 senatorial families, many more equestrian families, as well as members of the sub-elite, from wealthy imperial freedmen to people migrating into Rome to take advantage of political and economic opportunities in the capital. Like other “consumer cities” in the ancient world, Rome’s economy depended on the incomes that the Roman elite derived from their agricultural holdings in Italy and the provinces, as well as on taxes and rents from state-owned property around the empire (Erdkamp [2001](#)). Rome’s economic opportunities also attracted many people of very modest means, and the city also had a large number of slaves, perhaps several hundred thousand or more (Scheidel [2005](#), 71). This population-level could only be maintained by continued immigration, both of free people and slaves, from Italy, the provinces, and even outside the empire (Scheidel [2004](#); [2005](#); Jongman [2003](#)).

Rome’s immense size created economic challenges and opportunities. The principal challenge involved maintaining the stability of Rome’s food supply,

which required continued state intervention, both in securing sources of food in the provinces and in overseeing the distribution of foodstuffs within Rome. But at the same time, the sheer size of Rome's population created a substantial demand for manufactured goods and services, and the subsidies that the state provided for foodstuffs, one of the most costly items in a pre-industrial family's budget, substantially increased the purchasing power of Rome's population, and so in all likelihood spurred the productive and service centers of Rome's economy. One of the most important employers for the free population was construction (see DeLaine, [Chapter 23](#) in this volume), but there were other more modest industries that employed many people. Rome certainly imported many of the goods it consumed (Hopkins [1980](#); [1995/96](#)), but its large consumer demand provided opportunities for numerous local producers who operated workshops. Most artisans produced on a small and local scale, and they are to be numbered among the vast class of people in the Roman empire who lived at somewhat above the subsistence level (Scheidel and Friesen [2009](#)).

In what follows, I will examine the productive side of the Roman world's pre-eminent consumer city, with its likely effects both on economic activity in the capital itself, and more broadly, on Rome's relationship with its surrounding countryside. Rome's growth created economic opportunities for many people outside of the elite, and the growth of a moderately prosperous class of artisans and shop-owners had a profound effect on Rome's social structure in the early imperial period.

Manufacturing

The people involved in small-scale manufacturing in Rome, or in other cities in the empire, included a combination of the elite and people of much more modest means, but with very different roles. The role of the elite consisted mainly of owning the property from which raw materials were obtained — clay for the ceramic industries or for brick production came from rural estates, and private individuals owned some of the mines and quarries from which metals and stone for construction were taken (Hirt [2010](#), 84–93). Wealthy estate owners might also own the flocks of sheep or the land on which they grazed to provide wool for the manufacture of textiles. Another role for the elite was to own urban real estate, the locations in which many small workshops were located, or even to lend money to their own freedmen to finance small-scale business enterprises (D'Arms [1981](#)). But it does not seem to have been the case that members of the elite played much of a direct role in manufacturing itself (Kehoe [2007](#), 550; Pleket [1984](#)).

We can understand the roles of different groups in production by considering the brick industry in the vicinity of Rome. A landowner might control the clay

pit, or *figlina*, providing the raw material, situated within a rural estate. Supplying raw materials was apparently quite lucrative, since some of the wealthiest families in the Roman empire were involved, including, for example, Cn. Domitius Lucanus and Cn. Domitius Tullus, politically powerful and wealthy brothers in Flavian Rome, their heir Domitia Lucilla (the mother of Marcus Aurelius), and Septimius Severus' praetorian prefect, Plautianus. But as T. Helen (1975, 131–50; cf. Aubert 1994, 217–44) indicates in his study of 9,000 stamped bricks from Ostia dating to the first two centuries CE, the producer of the bricks, the *offinator*, was generally an entrepreneur independent from the owner of the clay pit. The *offinator* might lease the clay resource from the estate owner and take upon himself the task of manufacturing and selling the bricks. Some landowners, such as the Domitii, played a more direct role in manufacturing by using their freedmen as *offinatores*, but more commonly, as in other industries, the production of the raw material and the manufacture of finished products were distinct operations (Kehoe 2007, 561–2). Many of the clay pits and *officinae* that supplied bricks for Rome, including those of the Domitii, were located in the Tiber valley upstream from Rome. The obvious advantage to this location was the ability to transport bricks and other building materials to Rome along the river, which was much cheaper than transport overland (Gliozzo 2007).

As suggested above, manufacturing in the Roman empire was generally organized on a small scale, with the principle unit of production being a workshop with a master artisan and a small number of employees, often slaves. This seems to have been the case in Rome as well, although most of our evidence is indirect, since there is limited archaeological evidence in the city for industrial concerns. Much of the evidence we do have comes from epitaphs that record the deceased's occupation. In her study of these epitaphs, Sandra Joshel explores the values of working Romans by analyzing how people outside the city's elite, in particular slaves and freedmen, asserted their own identities through the work they performed. Some of the artisans Joshel examines in her study of labor in ancient Rome were slaves or freedmen connected with elite families. They included bakers, clothes-makers, carpenters, and builders, people whose services were needed for the day-to-day functions of an aristocratic household (Joshel 1992, 94–8). But it was much more common for people engaged in producing goods to be connected with workshops independent of aristocratic households. One example of this is a gold- and silversmith named M. Canuleius Zosimus (*CIL* 6.9222; Joshel 1992, 57–8). Zosimus was a freedman who lived 28 years and became an expert in engraving. His grateful patron, presumably also an engraver, provided for the monument that commemorates him.

Zosimus's situation offers some insight into the way in which much industrial production in the Roman world was organized, since he was a highly skilled artisan who was trained in his craft within a workshop setting. The ceramic

industry, including the production of amphoras used to transport wine, olive, oil, and fish sauce, as well as other types of pottery, is particularly valuable for understanding the role of workshops in the Roman economy, since ceramics are virtually indestructible, unlike goods made out of organic material, such as leather products and clothing, or goods made out of materials that could be re-used, such as metals. Moreover, some ceramic wares included inscriptions that indicate the manufacturer and often provide additional clues about its production. A good example is the *terra sigillata* industry, which Gunnar Fülle (1997) has analyzed in detail. The term “*terra sigillata*” refers to fine ceramic wares produced beginning in the second century BCE at Arretium in Etruria; in the first century CE the centers of production shifted to southern Gaul. The basic unit of production in this industry was the workshop, with a small number of slave and freed assistants. Rome had nothing like modern factories, where production depended on the use of machinery, and it is also likely that there were few if any ‘manufactories,’ which were characteristic of British industry on the eve of the Industrial Revolution (Fülle 1997, 113–14). Manufactories employed larger numbers of employees than a small workshop; they achieved some economies of scale gained from bringing numerous workers together, but without the increase in productivity gained from machinery.

This discussion of the ceramic industry does not necessarily mean that it dominated “industrial” production in the ancient world, since the numbers of artisans involved in the production of ceramics in any given location would have been modest. Based on comparative evidence from early-modern Rome, Peña (1999, 31) suggests a rough figure of one potter for every 900 residents; on this basis, in Rome during the Principate it is likely that there were anywhere between several hundred and a thousand or so potters. The ceramic workers in Rome included some producing terracotta lamps, such as a certain Myro, who employed two potters, or *figuli*, named Masculus and Clemens (CIL 15.6213, 6227, 6251; Loane 1938, 107).

In as much as Rome had the largest concentration of wealthy people anywhere in the ancient world, there were many artisans producing high-value items. H. J. Loane (1938, 60–112) discusses these professions in her still valuable study of industry and commerce in Rome. For instance, there were apparently numerous goldsmiths (*aurifices*), silversmiths (*vascularii*, *caelatores*), jewelers (*gemmarii*), and iron workers (*ferrarii*). The task of producing silver plate items for affluent purchasers involved a division of labor into various specialties, such as engravers (*caelatores*, *inauratores*), who added gold, *tritores*, who polished the silver, *toreuticenses*, who embossed it, and *flatuarii*, who cast the silver. As we might expect, there were also artisans involved in the production of clothing at various stages, including fullers (*fullones*), dyers (*infectores* or *purpurarii*), tailors (*vestiarii*), and producers of cheaper clothing (*centonarii*). Tanners (*coriarii*) produced leather for shoes and other

purposes. Individual artisans might specialize in the types of shoes they made; thus there were sandal-makers (*caligarii crepidarii*), and people who made women's shoes (*solatarii*), and even artisans who made these shoes out of papyrus (*soliares baxiases*). There were no doubt many more artisans who catered to a more humble clientele. Quite often, artisans specializing in one particular craft had shops (and probably lived) in close proximity to one another (Loane 1938, 64–65, n. 17). Neighborhoods or streets named after professions include the Vicus Lorarius, for people who made harnesses, the Vicus Sandaliarius, for shoemakers, the Vicus Materiarius, apparently for carpenters, the Scalae Anulariae, where it was possible to find ring-makers, the Vicus Vitriarius, which had glass-blowers, as well as two streets named after perfume-makers, the Vicus Tirarius and the Vicus Unguentarius (see Holleran, [Chapter 22](#) in this volume). There was even an area, the Sigillaria, named after clay-statue makers.

Slavery was an essential feature to the investment in human capital needed to maintain workshops. The master artisan would train his slaves in his craft, and for some time benefit from their labor. He would reward his skilled and highly trained slaves by allowing them to keep some earnings in the form of the *peculium*, a sum of money or property nominally belonging to the slave owner but under the immediate control of the slave. Eventually, skilled slaves could purchase their freedom, or receive it as an award for years of service, and go out and establish their own workshops. They in turn would employ their own slaves, and provide them training. Certainly the slave-owner would only invest in the training of his slaves if he could be reasonably assured that he would receive some return on this investment. However, social expectations might influence the decision of a master to manumit a slave (Mouritsen 2011). When freed artisans went off to establish their own workshops, it seems highly likely that their previous owner and now patron maintained ties with them. Formally, a freedman owed obedience (*obsequium*) and labor services (*operae*) to his patron. The labor services were commonly negotiated as part of the process of manumission, and in some cases they could be considerable, involving hundreds of days of labor over the lifetime of the freedman (Hawkins 2016). In Fülle's (1997) view, the newly manumitted artisan would be an "economically independent" social dependent, but the requirement for many freedmen to perform *operae* suggests that economic ties might continue after manumission. In any case, this type of organization seems suited to small-scale production. As Cameron Hawkins (2016) argues, many artisans maintained close ties with their freedmen. This provided an important advantage, since the production of manufactured goods was often a seasonal business (see below), so that artisans could call upon their freedmen to provide labor at times of peak demand.

It is hard to see much room for elite investment in manufacturing organized in this way, except in terms of possibly providing credit for individual artisans.

The main difference between ceramic workshops and those for other products, such as leather and metal goods, was that the former tended to be located near the sources of raw materials. Thus the centers for the production of fine ceramic wares were often rural, whereas the production of other finished goods was located near to the urban markets that consumed them.

Industries involving artisans were loosely organized around individual workshops, with little room for anything like a vertically integrated firm. One of the characteristics of this type of production was an at best modest specialization of labor. This workshop model can be applied to many other industries, at least those that did not require significant economies of scale and as a result a great deal of initial investment, such as mining (Hirt 2010). In the workshops that characterized production in Rome, there would not be much of a competitive advantage from scale. Much production, especially of expensive items for the elite, was in response to individual orders, and the potential volume of business depended on the seasons in which upper-class Romans would be resident in Rome in the first place, since many people vacated Rome during the late summer and early fall (Hawkins 2012, 182–6). It would only make sense to organize production on a large scale for products that could be kept in inventory, such as bricks or other ceramic products. Consequently, with more expensive, specialized items, a master artisan might call upon individual subcontractors, such as the specialists named above, to carry out specialized tasks.

Although it seems beyond doubt that Rome was a net importer of manufactured goods, it still had workshops that produced products for markets outside the city. One example is a workshop on the Janiculum that produced ceramic lamps (of the *Vogelkopflampen* type; Maestripieri and Ceci 1990). The workshop is known from the stamps that the lamps carry – OPPI, COR, and COPPIRES – which makes it possible to identify the owners of the workshop as the family of C. Oppius Restitutus. The workshop seems to have flourished from c. 70 to 140 CE, and its products were sold in many regions in the Mediterranean world, including especially North Africa, Gaul, and Spain, as well as central Italy and Sardinia. It seems likely that Roman workshops producing less durable goods than ceramics also reached markets far afield.

Members of professions in Rome were organized in *collegia*, which can be translated as “guilds” (Joshel 1992, 69–71, 113–22; Liu 2009). The *collegia* served mainly to protect the mutual interests of the members of a given profession, as well as to provide a social outlet. Their economic role was indirect. They did not control membership in a profession or determine markets and prices, as guilds in the medieval and early-modern worlds did. But they almost certainly did function as places in which information was exchanged and business arrangements were struck, and they also provided a way to enforce standards of conduct in business informally (Hawkins 2012, 186–93).

The use of slavery as the setting in which training took place has important implications for the social structure of Rome. Of course, the Roman system was not an inevitable one in the ancient world, since, in some regions, such as Egypt, a very different system prevailed. There, master artisans contracted with the parents of boys (or sometimes the owners of slaves, including slave women) to provide training; the artisan benefited from this arrangement by having a source of labor, and an apprentice under contract to a master artisan would receive a modest wage that would increase with age, i.e., as his work became more valuable to the master. In Rome and in other parts of the empire where training revolved around the master–slave relationship, it is noteworthy that freedmen seem to be very prominent among the people recorded in their epitaphs as artisans, and they often identified themselves not only by their trade, but also by their place of business (Joshel 1992, 106–12). This suggests that Roman industries depended on a continued source of new slaves, whether ones born into households in Rome, or imported from elsewhere (Jongman 2003; Scheidel 2005). Since master artisans commonly received their training as slaves, it seems as though there would be little room for freeborn workshop owners. Moreover, artisans from a servile background subscribed to their own social values, which were quite different from those of upper-class society. They established their prestige by emphasizing their skills and reputation in their work (Joshel 1992). Their imitation of upper-class values can mainly be seen in their efforts to marry and produce children, much as the Augustan legislation prescribed for freeborn Romans (Shaw 1991).

Economic Hierarchies within Rome

Certainly, much of the city’s economy was directly affected by the consumption needs of the Roman elite. In one understanding of the economy, the major impetus to commerce in Rome derived from the efforts of the elite to supply their large urban households with products from their estates outside the city, in Italy or even in the provinces (Whittaker 1988). According to this view, wealthy Romans did not rely on a private market to supply their urban households, which might include hundreds of people, including slaves. Instead, they brought food directly from their own estates, and commerce in other, more expensive but less bulky goods tended to “piggy back” on ships bringing food supplies to Rome, much as happened with ships serving the *annona*.

But the role of the elite in the economy of Rome is likely to have been more complicated than this. As the city grew in the last centuries of the Republic, real estate must have become increasingly valuable, and the subsidies for foodstuffs that supported Rome’s huge population under the Principate will have helped to maintain the value of real estate as new generations of

immigrants sought housing. Consequently, members of the Roman elite invested considerable sums in urban real estate; N. Rosenstein (2008) goes so far as to argue that urban real estate rivaled agriculture as a source of wealth for the Roman elite during the middle and late Republic. Typically, the owners of apartment blocks, or *insulae*, leased their properties to middlemen. They in turn took on the trouble of managing the properties and leasing individual apartments to house the hundreds of thousands of free Romans of humble status who comprised the majority of Rome's population (Frier 1977, 1980). Apartment blocks often had commercial space on the ground floor, and these *tabernae* were the locus of a great deal of the day to day economic activity in Rome, much as they were in Pompeii, where the archaeological record for private and commercial real estate is much better preserved (Wallace-Hadrill 1994, 118–42). *Tabernae* housed workshops of various sorts as well as places to buy cooked food and wine (see Holleran, Chapter 22 in this volume). One of the important components of the economy of Rome and of other cities was prostitution, which was legal in the Roman world and taxed (McGinn 2004, 14–77). Elite property owners had a hand in this trade, which was as lucrative as it was dishonorable, in that they often owned the properties that housed brothels, even if they were not directly involved in the trade itself. Of course, the emperor Gaius (37–41) carried elite involvement in prostitution to its logical conclusion by opening a brothel on the Palatine hill.

In the view of Nicholas Purcell (1999; 2000), elite investment in Roman real estate was part of a broader system of elite patronage. According to this view, the people renting apartments and *tabernae* from members of the elite were also their social dependents. Purcell argues that migration to Rome was not a random event, but was to a large extent a function of the political and economic ambitions of the elite, who brought people to Rome from their hometowns and in doing so populated neighborhoods in Rome with their clients (if not in the formal sense of the term). *Tabernae* were key to the economic interests of the landowning elite. In Purcell's view, the free market for foodstuffs was quite limited in scope. Since the state imported grain, and eventually olive oil, the major private market would have been for wine, and much of this would have been dominated by wealthy Roman landowners who used their *tabernae* as a way of distributing wine and other products from their estates in Italy (Purcell 2000, 419).

But there is good reason to believe that the private market for grain was more robust than Purcell envisions (not to mention the private market for housing). At times the state was called upon to stabilize prices, for example under Tiberius, when a scarcity forced the emperor to sell grain at reduced prices (Tac. *Ann.* 2.87; Lo Cascio 2009). On other occasions, the emperors established maximum prices for grain (Erdkamp 2005, 283–4). It seems likely that the most common method used by the state to stabilize prices was to sell its grain to private dealers, who themselves would sell it on the open market

(Erdkamp 2005, 250–52). Thus, the Roman government could use the revenues it derived from taxes and rents from imperial estates to bolster the food supply at Rome. High prices for grain might lead to food riots, as might also happen in provincial cities (Erdkamp 2005, 262–63). In Rome riots famously occurred in the first century under the emperors Tiberius and Claudius. Much later, in 190 CE under Commodus, the praetorian prefect Cleander was turned over to be lynched by a mob angry over high food prices (Birley 2000, 189–90).

Clearly, a private market existed for the basic staples consumed at Rome, not to mention for the luxury food items produced in the surrounding *suburbium* (Erdkamp 2005, 237–57). The late imperial distribution of pork in Rome involved the state's buying pigs from private producers (Lo Cascio, 1999; 2009). Moreover, in view of the ways in which wine, olive oil, and fish sauce were exported from Spain and other areas of the empire to Rome and other locations, it seems likely that the market for these products evolved constantly, which would make it more difficult for well-connected members of the elite to establish monopolies at Rome. This is not to deny the elite a dominating influence over the economy of Rome, but much of their incomes, especially during the Principate, derived from agricultural holdings whose products were marketed in many places other than Rome.

The state subsidies for basic food supplies relieved the Roman plebs of one of the most important costs of living, and these subsidies reached a significant portion of the free population. This distribution of free grain to some 150,000–200,000 males, perhaps one-third of the free population, would have alleviated budgetary stress for the majority of families (Erdkamp 2005, 242–3). The amount of grain distributed each month, five *modii*, was much more than any one individual would be likely to consume, and for many recipients it was a subsidy for the entire family. When one adds in the indirect subsidies to the grain and other products sold on the private market, the living standard of people in Rome was artificially high. This situation surely had profound consequences for Rome's economy. For one, subsidies for food attracted immigrants to Rome. More important, these subsidies freed up substantial funds that people would otherwise have spent on food for other goods and services. So we could expect that the Roman population made more discretionary purchases of luxury goods or other goods and services. These considerations are consistent with what Keith Hopkins has maintained about the economy of the city of Rome, that the cumulative demand of its population was an important stimulus to commerce and manufacturing (cf. Hopkins 1980, 1995/6).

In modern societies the curtailing of state subsidies for fuel and food can lead to riots, but the loss of these subsidies is also seen as a factor in the reduction of demand for consumer goods. In an economy with significant poverty, many people spend the day working to make enough to have a meal, and if they do

not make enough money for this, they are obliged either to borrow or go without. The Roman population lived in much greater security, and the city's economy benefited from this. The costs for this prosperity were borne by the taxpayers of the empire.

Imperial building programs also subsidized the earning power of Rome's population. Although such building programs would depend on the interests (and resources) of an individual emperor, they cumulatively represented one of the basic sources of employment for people, and it is likely that the vast majority of construction workers were free (Brunt 1980). Occasional but substantial imperial building programs, such as the baths of Caracalla, employed thousands of people and injected a great deal of cash into the economy (De Laine 1997, 175–205, and Chapter 23 in this volume, as well as Tacoma, Chapter 20 in this volume). Such building programs subsidized spending in the Roman economy because they were paid for by taxes and tribute, but the wages paid to workers increased total demand in Rome. To consider again Rome's migrant population, many people must have resided in Rome for part of the year, dividing their time between Rome and the countryside. While in Rome they could have earned wages in construction. Outside of Rome, the same workers could have performed agricultural work, especially at the busiest seasons, such as the harvest. Given the likelihood that residents in Rome had substantial spending power resulting from food subsidies, it is also likely that migrants from the countryside brought things to sell as well to common people in the city. Moreover, free wage earners were not the only people in Rome with money to spend. Many slaves had small amounts of money from their *peculia*, and they too contributed to the overall high level of discretionary spending that characterized Rome. The economic relationship between Rome and the surrounding countryside, then, worked at many levels, and we can imagine the existence of significant commercial relationships that involved humble people and as a result leave little trace in the historical record. But cumulatively, these commercial relationships were integral to the economy of a city of one million people.

Financial Services

Rome attracted the very wealthiest people from around the empire, and the concentration of wealthy people in the imperial capital dwarfed that of any other city in the ancient world. Rome thus required financial services to address the needs of both the wealthy elite as well as numerous more humble people engaging in various types of commerce. This commerce might involve the importing of food for the private market, which, as indicated above, remained quite substantial even in the face of the state-sponsored *annona*. As Peña (1999, 22) suggests, auctions are likely to have played a significant role

in arranging contracts to import food. Auctions for food and other products required credit, which was provided by a class of bankers or money-lenders called *argentarii* or *coactores argentarii*. They are likely to have been most active at Rome's markets, including the Forum Boarium, the Macellum Magnum (see Holleran, [Chapter 22](#) in this volume), and the Portus Vinarius Superior, a wine market by the Tiber, where wines imported from Italy via the river were sold (Andreau [2000](#), 776).

The question about such bankers is how central their services were to the economy of the city of Rome, and to that of the empire more generally. Scholars such as William Harris ([2006](#)), an historian, and Peter Temin ([2013](#), 157–89), an economist, have argued that Roman financial institutions were quite sophisticated, rivaling those of early-modern Europe. At the very least, Rome and other major cities had banks or other financial institutions that could arrange payments of significant sums across the empire, to support commerce as well as the financial needs of the upper classes. Although there is a great deal of scholarly controversy on this point, and the evidence is difficult to interpret, it seems likely that *argentarii* often ran businesses with considerable capital. Certainly the late third-century jurist Hermogenianus (*Dig.* 26.7.50) envisioned that a tutor responsible for managing the money of his pupil or ward might deposit this money with an *argentarius* (Treggiari [1999](#), 740 and n. 22). Romans could deposit money with bankers for safekeeping (under a Roman contract of *depositum*), but it is also likely that bankers could receive funds from investors as loans, pay interest on these amounts, and then use the funds for credit (Harris [2006](#), 11–16).

Upper-class Romans and many others took out loans, mostly contracted on a short-term basis, for consumption as well as for commercial purposes; from the perspective of the creditor, both types of loan represented a similar sort of investment (Andreau [2000](#), 775–7). The extent to which upper-class Romans relied on bankers to lend money and invest in commercial ventures, rather than arranging such transactions through their own agents, is uncertain, although it seems likely that many upper-class Romans turned first to private creditors. Lending money at interest was a basic part of the portfolio of any upper-class Roman (Andreau [2000](#), 769–75), although there was a class of financial agents in Rome whose main economic function was to arrange short-term credit for business ventures, rather than to invest in long-term capital projects (Andreau [2000](#), 776). One would be the L. Calpurnius Daphnus, an *argentarius* commemorated in a funerary monument from Rome in the first century CE (*CIL* 6.9183, *ILS* 7501; Harris [2006](#), 16; Andreau [1974](#), 111–16). Bankers apparently conducted business in the Roman Forum, including at *tabernae* associated with the Basilica Aemilia (Patterson [2010](#), 219). The activities of bankers were probably curtailed considerably when runaway inflation in the 270s made their business quite difficult to carry on (Peña [1999](#), 22).

Conclusion

The economy of Rome, the ancient world's pre-eminent consumer city, was complex. It catered to the needs of the wealthy Roman elite, including the emperor, some 600 senators with residences in Rome, and many more members of the equestrian order and other wealthy people in addition. But it also revolved around the consumption needs of hundreds of thousands of people of much more modest means, including slaves who worked in professions serving the elite, or in professions constructing and maintaining public and private buildings and the infrastructure of the city. The economy of the city was driven by two sources of wealth: the taxes and rents that the government and Roman aristocrats brought into the city from outside, and the subsidies that the state paid for food. The effects on the economy of the wealth of which the emperor and other members of the Roman elite disposed can be readily seen in the remains of the spectacular public buildings that defined Rome. But the subsidies for food gave ordinary Romans the spending money that helped to maintain a thriving economy distinct from the needs of the upper classes. This situation certainly made Rome an attractive place for people to invest in businesses. At the same time, much of the economy of Rome depended on the euergetism of the emperor, and when this began to falter in late Antiquity, new institutions, especially the Church, stepped in to help meet the needs of Rome's humble people (Purcell 1999). The classical city of Rome, however, had a thriving and dynamic economy fueled by subsidies largely paid for at the expense of Rome's provinces.

Guide to Further Reading

Loane (1938) is a broad survey of industries in Rome that offers a very useful introduction. Joshel (1992) is the fundamental study of the types of jobs in which slaves engaged. It builds on Treggiari (1969 and 1976). Nicholas Purcell (1999 and 2000) examines the role of patronage and state subsidies in the Roman economy, contrasting early imperial Rome with late Antiquity, when the Church played a major role in Rome's economy. The work of Cameron Hawkins is fundamental for understanding the organization of Roman craft production (e.g., Hawkins 2012 and 2016). Liu 2009 is a study of the important role that *collegia*, often translated as "guilds," played in craft productions and more broadly in Roman society.

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CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

The Retail Trade

Claire Holleran

With a population of perhaps as many as one million inhabitants at its greatest extent (see Lo Cascio, [Chapter 6](#) in this volume), there was a remarkable concentration of consumers in ancient Rome, the vast majority of whom were almost entirely reliant on the market to supply their everyday needs. These people required a steady supply of both food and manufactured goods, while the elite of the city demanded luxury goods as markers of their wealth and status. A thriving retail trade developed in order to fulfil the needs of these varied consumers, and commerce no doubt became one of the most audible and visible aspects of life in Rome. The retail system was composed of various different elements, all linked together in a multifaceted network of distribution, reflecting the complexity of the urban infrastructure and the diversity of the population. This chapter is concerned with the structure and organization of this retail system, beginning with a consideration of the topography of commerce in Rome, before exploring the various elements that made up the complex distribution network of the city, including shops and workshops, markets, fairs, street traders, and auctions.

The Topography of Trade

Retailers of items that were purchased on a regular basis, such as food and drink, together with providers of routine services, such as barbers and fullers, were likely commonplace throughout Rome, with consumers purchasing everyday items and services in their local neighborhoods. Certain areas of the city, however, were known to be particularly commercial, or were associated with the production and distribution of certain goods. In the late Republic and early empire, the Via Sacra, which led from the Palatine down to the Roman Forum, was home to goldsmiths (*aurifices*: *CIL* 6.9207, 9212; *AE* 1971, 43), pearl-dealers (*margaritarii*: *CIL* 6.9545–49, 33872), jewelers (*gemmarii*: *CIL* 6.9435), engravers of metal (*caelator*: *CIL* 6.9221), and artisans who embroidered clothes with gold (*auri vestrix*: *CIL* 6.9214). The *Scalae Anulariae*, or stairs of the ring-makers, were located somewhere nearby (Suet. *Aug.* 72; *LTUR* 4, 238–9), and there may still have been *margaritarii* in the district in the fourth century, when the Regionary Catalogues record a *Porticus Margaritaria* in Regio VIII (Forum Romanum: *LTUR* 4, 129). Honey

(Varro *Rust.* 3.16.23; *AE* 1971, 42), fruit (Varro *Rust.* 1.2.10; Ov. *Ars Am.* 2.263–6), garlands of flowers (*CIL* 6.9283), perfume (*CIL* 6.1974; *AE* 1932, 22), and musical instruments (*CIL* 6.9935), were also available along the Via Sacra, as were peppers and spices; the latter were imported from Egypt and Arabia and sold from the Horrea Piperataria, built by Domitian (Cass. Dio. 73.24; cf. Hor. *Epist.* 2.1.270). Perhaps unsurprisingly, Propertius (2.24.14) and Ovid (*Am.* 1.8.97–100) associated the street with the purchase of gifts.

The Vicus Tuscus, a street in the valley between the Palatine and Capitoline hills, part of the route from the Forum Romanum to the Forum Boarium and the Circus Maximus, was also associated with the sale of luxury items, including silks (Mart. 11.27.11), purple dye (*CIL* 6.9848; *CIL* 14.2433), perfumes (Hor. *Sat.* 2.3.228), ointments, and incense; in fact the dealers in incense and perfumes (*turarii*) were so numerous that in late antiquity the street apparently became known as the Vicus Turarius (Porph. *ad Hor. Epist.* 1.20.1, 2.1.269). The Vicus Tuscus, together with the adjacent Horrea Agrippiana, was also associated with tailors (*vestiarii*: *CIL* 6.9972, 9976, 37826, *CIL* 14.3958), as was a crossroads of unknown location, the Compitum Alarium (*CIL* 6.4476, 9970, 9971). The Circus Flaminius in the southern Campus Martius appears to have been connected with the production and retail of glass and bronze items (Mart. 12.74.2; Morel 1987: 141), and also the sale of wigs (Ov. *Ars Am.* 3.166–7). The Subura and the Velabrum were also busy commercial districts (Holleran 2012, 53).

Some places in Rome were referred to by way of the traders who congregated there, with locations describes as *inter aerarios* (among the coppersmiths: *CIL* 6.9186), *inter falcarios* (scythe makers: Cic. *Cat.* 1.8; *Sul.* 52), and *inter lignarios* (timber dealers: Livy 35.41.10). The first two locations are otherwise unknown, but Livy places the timber dealers in the Aventine district. Certain streets or areas in Rome also derived their names directly from trades that must have been practiced there at some point, with a toponym often preserving a past association. Inscriptions refer to a Vicus Lorarius (street of the harness makers: *CIL* 6.9796), a Vicus [...] ionum Ferrariorum (blacksmiths: *CIL* 6.9185), and in Regio XIII (the Aventine), a Vicus Frumentarius (grain dealers: *CIL* 6.975), and a Vicus Materiarius (carpenters or timber merchants: *CIL* 6.975). The Regionary Catalogues record a Vicus Vitriarius (glassmakers) and an Area Pannaria (second-hand cloth) in Regio I (Porta Capena), a Vicus Unguentarius (perfumers) in Regio VIII (Forum Romanum), and a Vicus Sandaliarius (sandal-makers) in Regio IV (Temple of Peace, cf. *CIL* 6.448, 761; *CIL* 10.3981). By the second century CE, the Vicus Sandaliarius was noted by Aulus Gellius more for its booksellers than its sandal makers, as was an area known as the Sigillaria, named after the small statuettes or *sigilla* that were also made and sold here (Gell. *NA* 2.3.5, 5.4.1, 18.4.1; see also Nicholls, Chapter 16 in this volume); in the first century at least, books were also sold in the Argiletum and the Vicus Tuscus (Mart.

1.2.7–8, 1.3.1–2, 1.117).

The clustering of producers and retailers is a common phenomenon in pre-modern and, to a lesser extent, modern cities. In Rome it was made possible by the size of the market. The practice enables a buyer to locate particular items quickly, and to browse among different sellers. Clustering also facilitates the dissemination of ideas and information among traders, including details of supply, demand, and prices. Particular locations are often selected for practical reasons, relating to issues such as supply lines or concentrations of consumers. Luxury trades, for example, were located in the political center of Rome precisely because this was where the wealthy elite could be found; the high price of property and rent in these areas must also have been a key factor in the development of clusters of traders in luxury goods. Some producers, such as potters, tend to cluster on the periphery of cities. While clay beds in the Velabrum were being exploited in archaic Rome (Ammerman *et al.* 2008; Winter *et al.* 2009), pottery production was primarily concentrated on the Janiculum and in the Vatican district in the imperial period (Morel 1987, 130; 2001, 247; Peña 1999, 31–3). This surely reflects the need not only for space for kilns, but also ready access to raw materials such as clay, and timber for fuel; the danger of fire associated with kilns is another reason for placing such traders on the outskirts of the city. Despite some natural clustering of producers and retailers in particular areas of Rome, however, it should be noted that both artisanal and commercial activity was widely distributed throughout the city, and the modern distinction between commercial, industrial, and residential areas rarely holds for the ancient world. Rather, workshops, shops, stallholders, markets, and hawkers were found in every part of Rome, and commercial units were integrated into the frontage of *domus* and on the ground floor of *insulae* blocks throughout the city.

Tabernae

Literary descriptions of Rome suggest that *tabernae* were a noted feature of the Forum Romanum from an early date, with those on the north side initially associated with butchers (Livy 3.48.5; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 11.37.5), but later housing bankers, a deliberate move (made probably sometime in the fourth century BCE) intended to increase the dignity of the political space (*LTUR* 5, 10–12; Var. *Ap. Non.* 853L). These units eventually became known as the *tabernae novae* in order to distinguish them from the *tabernae veteres* located on the other side of the Forum, and *sub novis* and *sub veteribus* (e.g. Plaut. *Curc.* 480; Varro *Ling.* 6.59; Plin. *HN.* 35.25) were defined locations in Rome by the third century BCE. While we do not know what form these early *tabernae* took, archaeological evidence from the imperial period indicates that

they typically consisted of a single rectilinear room, sometimes with a backroom and/or mezzanine floor above, and always with a wide entrance to the street. The door threshold and lintel were grooved to hold wooden shutters, which were removed during the day; a carbonized example can be seen at Pompeii (IX.7.10; see [Figure 22.1](#)). Such commercial units are particularly well-known at Ostia, where all main thoroughfares are lined with *tabernae* units, ranging in size from 10 to 50 square meters, with entrances typically around 3 meters wide, although the largest were as wide as 5 meters (DeLaine 2005, 32–4; Girri 1956, 6; Packer 1971, 21). The positioning of *tabernae* along main streets and in the vicinity of central civic spaces and public buildings was intended to ensure maximum visibility, the commercial benefits of which were noted already by Lysias (24.20) in fourth-century BCE Athens. Few examples survive in Rome, but the lowest level of the “Aracoeli insula”, built against the Capitoline hillside, for instance, is composed of a series of *tabernae* behind an arcade. The density with which *taberna*-like units appear on fragments of the Severan Marble Plan (Reynolds 1996, 153; and Tucci, [Chapter liii](#) in this volume) bears out the testimony of Herodian (7.12.5) that the streets of imperial Rome were lined with *ergasteria*, a Greek synonym of *tabernae* (Holleran 2012, 116–17). Indeed, *tabernae* were a particular feature of late Republican and imperial Rome, reflecting a pattern of increased capital investment in permanent commercial space, linked to the growing commercialization of the economy and the stability of demand in the city.

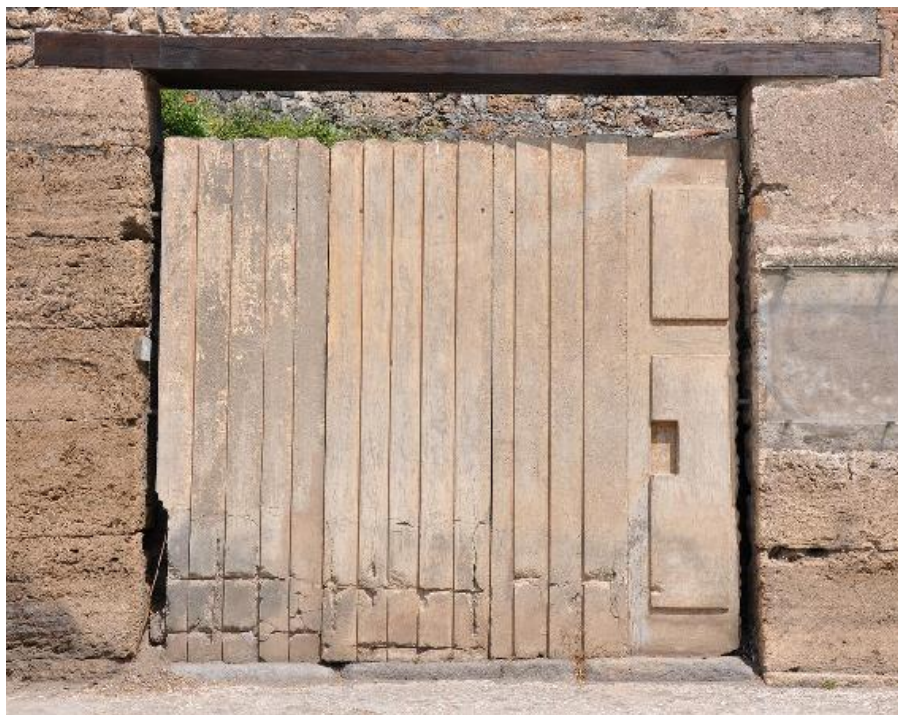


Figure 22.1 *Taberna* shutters, Pompeii (IX.7.10).

Photograph: C. Holleran.

Tabernae could house a wide variety of people and their commercial activities within a relatively standardized architectural unit. Many combined production, retail, and habitation within the same unit, a common phenomenon in pre-modern retail systems. The size and layout of *tabernae* were suited to many types of small-scale production, since the wide entrance ensured that a workshop was well-ventilated, while light was maximized. The design facilitated interaction between those inside and outside, and the interior was able to act as its own advertisement to passers-by, who could see, hear, and smell the activities taking place within.

Butchers, bakers, fishmongers, and other food producers occupied *tabernae*; cheese, for example, was smoked and then sold in *tabernae casiariae*, those in the Velabrum being particularly famous (Mart. 11.52.10, 13.32; Ulp. *Dig.* 8.5.8.5). Many served as cookshops and bars, and given that food and drink could be consumed both on and off the premises (e.g. Plut. *Mar.* 44.1), these establishments were more than just venues for socializing, eating, and drinking, but were an integral part of the retail system in the city. Other documented uses include barbers (Vitr. *De Arch.* 9.8.2), doctors (Cic. *Clu.* 178, 180; Plin. *HN* 29.6.12), fullers (Apul. *Met.* 9.25), bankers (e.g. Livy 26.11.7), and booksellers and copyists (e.g. Cic. *Phil.* 2.21; Hor. *Sat.* 1.4.71; Mart. 1.3.1, 1.117.10).

If the interior of a *taberna* were used for production, the area directly in front of the entrance could be used to display completed goods for sale, while for those that were used solely for the purposes of retail, the exterior provided additional space for display. *Tabernae* that were fronted by arcades or colonnades could also transform these into extensions of their commercial arena, providing an area protected from the elements in which shoppers could browse. This was such a problem in first-century CE Rome that Domitian issued an edict prohibiting *tabernae* from extending beyond their thresholds, an act which Martial (7.61) praised for its apparent effectiveness at clearing the streets, although the passing of further legislation in the following century suggests that this measure was not entirely successful (Papin. *Dig.* 43.10.1.3–5). Theft must have been a pressing issue when goods were displayed for sale outside, and even the lamps which illuminated the exterior of *tabernae* were apparently sometimes stolen (Alfenus *Dig.* 9.2.52.1; see also Mart. 7.61.5 for flagons chained to columns outside *tabernae*).

Markets

Rome was host to both high- and low-frequency periodic markets, which could be located in a forum or any other open space, as well as more permanent markets, which tended to be housed in purpose-built structures known as *macella*. A *macellum* is attested in Rome by 179 BCE, although this was probably not the first such structure (Varro *Ap. Festus* 125 L; Livy 40.51, but see also Livy 26.27, 27.11.16). Livy (40.51) describes it as a central open space surrounded by *tabernae*, which became the typical form for *macella* in the Roman world, sometimes with internal colonnades; in the center of the courtyard there was very often a round building, known as a *tholos*, or a water basin, fountain, or statue (Varro *Sat. Men.* fr. 23, 108). Republican Rome's *macellum* was located just off the Via Sacra, from which a short street, the Corneta, led to the entrance (Varro *Ling.* 5.152; Cic. *Quinct.* 6.25; Verr. 2.3.145). Horace, writing in the late first century BCE, provides the latest surviving reference to this particular market (Hor. *Sat.* 2.3.225–36), but it may have continued to function into the early empire, and some of its functions may have been transferable to the Temple of Peace that took its place under Vespasian (LTUR 3, 202).

By that time, there were at least two other *macella* operating in Rome. The Macellum Liviae probably dated from the early empire, named for Augustus's wife, although it is not actually attested until the fourth century, when an inscription records its restoration by Valentinian, Valens, and Gratian (CIL 6.1178), and it is listed in regio V (the Esquiline) in the Regionary Catalogues. It can probably be identified with a building labelled MACELLUM on the Severan Marble Plan (fr.157a–c), a rectangular

courtyard with a fountain in the center, surrounded by *tabernae* and an internal colonnade, whose remains were partly excavated in the nineteenth century (Lanciani, *BCAR* 1874, 36, 212–13), producing numerous weights (De Ruyt 1983, 321). According to Appian (*B Civ.* 1.58), there was already a market in this area in the Republican period, known as the Forum Esquilinum, and the Macellum Liviae probably absorbed some of the functions of this earlier market.

Nero also built a *macellum*, situated on the Caelian hill and inaugurated in 59 CE (Cass. Dio. 62.18). Coins issued to celebrate the event depict a two-storey *tholos* with a statue in the center, surrounded by a rectangular two-storey portico, all decorated with garlands (see Figure 22.2). Named on the coins as *mac(ellum) Aug(usti)*, it soon became known as the Macellum Magnum (Great Market), as it is listed in the fourth-century Regionary Catalogues (see also *CIL* 6.1648, 9183). Its exact location on the Caelian is disputed, but its positioning reflects the changing topography of the imperial city and increased local demand; as the Forum valley and the Palatine became the preserve of the emperor, the elite moved onto the other hills of the city, especially the Esquiline and the Caelian.



Figure 22.2 *Dupondius* of Nero, Macellum Magnum, RIC1 184 p.162.

Photograph: A Burnett.

It should be noted here that the complex on the flank of the Quirinal conventionally known as the “Markets of Trajan” was not a *macellum*. Not only is the structure architecturally very different to the relatively standardized form of the *macellum*, its relationship to commerce is not so clear, and the name is a modern invention. The complex has a limited number of narrow entrances and staircases, and the various parts of the structure fit together rather awkwardly, inhibiting the easy circulation of goods, carts, and people necessary for a busy commercial complex. Its different sectors probably performed a number of different roles, containing offices, archives,

commercial units, public halls, and residential units (Holleran 2012, 167–9).

The *macella* in Rome were luxury food markets catering to the demands of wealthy consumers. Meat was one of the key products on offer, together with fish, vegetables, and various other foodstuffs, particularly expensive delicacies (Holleran 2012, 170–80). Many of the more expensive items in *macella* were sold by auction, particularly rare and prized fish. Demand for such fish was high and the wealthy were prepared to pay extraordinary prices, which could best be settled on through auction. Auction sales required the presence of *argentarii* (bankers), who lent money on a short-term basis to successful bidders, thus enabling sellers to receive payment immediately. A tombstone from Rome commemorates one such *argentarius* – Lucius Calpurnius Daphnus – who was based in the Macellum Magnum in the late first century CE (CIL 6.9183). The tombstone includes an illustration of an auction taking place, showing a man, presumably the deceased, standing on a platform and holding a codex of writing tablets in his left hand and a fish in the other; he is flanked on either side by two men carrying baskets of fish (see Andreau 1974, Figs. 11–12). The *tholos* found in the center of many *macella* may have been intended to display goods before auction and also to provide a raised platform on which auction sales themselves could take place.

Periodic markets, known as *nundinae* and held every eight days, catered to a more general clientele. Little is known about the location of *nundinae* in Rome, although they presumably took place in the fora or open spaces of the city; in the late Republic, the *nundinae* may have been held in the Circus Flaminius, since Cicero describes Pompey making a speech here to a market day crowd in 61 BCE (Cic. Att. 14.1). Such periodic markets are typically associated with local producers, who come to town on market-day to sell their produce and access goods and services. In smaller urban centers, the market for locally produced food and other goods may have been adequately supplied by such periodic markets, but the size of the market at Rome means that from a relatively early date, the *nundinae* were supplemented by more frequent periodic and daily markets. There is, however, plenty of evidence to demonstrate that the *nundinae* continued to operate at least into the first century CE, when the city is included on surviving market lists from Campania, indicating that the *nundinae* at Rome were integrated into a wider market network (Inscr. Ital. 13.2.49, 52, 53; Frayn 1993, 3–6, 17–23). There were also numerous specialized markets, although the names of areas may have remained in use long after the markets had ceased; the most famous examples of such commercial fora are the Forum Holitorium, or vegetable market, and the Forum Boarium, or cattle market, although numerous others are documented (see Holleran 2012, 93–7).

Low-frequency markets or fairs, known as *mercatus*, were also held in Rome, generally in connection with religious games and festivals; for example, fairs followed the *ludi Apollinares*, the *ludi Romani*, and the *ludi Plebei* in July,

September, and November respectively (*Inscr. Ital.* 13.2.377). Such religious festivals attracted additional visitors to Rome and will have marked a peak in demand in the city. The *sigillaria* took place towards the end of the Saturnalia in December, and was marked by an exchange of gifts, which often took the form of small statuettes or *sigilla*. These were sold from temporary canvas booths, which in Juvenal's day were located in the Porticus Argonautarum beside the Campus Martius, although the Scholiast on this passage says that in later years these were located at the baths of Trajan (Juv. 6. 153–5).

Streets and Other Public Spaces

As already noted, *tabernae* in Rome sometimes spilled out over their thresholds, necessitating legislation aimed at minimizing obstructions in the streets of the city. The obstructions caused by *tabernae* may have been exacerbated by the presence of temporary stalls and ambulant hawkers. At Pompeii, attempts were made to license and control stallholders, particularly those whose stalls were located in popular, and no doubt lucrative, locations. Sellers of sacrificial cakes, for example, noted their names and places of trade on the wall of the Temple of Venus close to the forum (*CIL* 4.1768–9; cf. *CIL* 4.677, 2996). Stallholders can also be seen in the foreground of the famous painting of the riot in the amphitheater in 59 CE, with sales areas marked out and shaded by cloth strung between trees (National Archaeological Museum of Naples, Inv. No. 11222). Painted notices on the exterior of the amphitheater recorded the names of stall holders who had been granted permission to trade there by the aediles (*CIL* 4.1096a–b, 1097, 1097a–b, 1115). It is not known whether similar measures were taken in Rome by the aediles (or, later, the office of the Urban Prefect), but it seems likely, given the even greater pressure on public space in the city.

Street trade is by its very nature ephemeral, and those who hawked goods from trays, from mats on the floor, or from temporary wooden stalls, will have left little archaeological trace of their existence. This makes it difficult to assess quantitatively the number of street traders in Rome. Nevertheless, surviving literary sources make casual reference to street traders as a part of everyday life in Rome and other ancient cities, mentioning sellers of a wide variety of items, from gladiatorial programs (*Cic. Phil.* 2.97.3) to wigs (*Ov. Ars Am.* 3.167) and cloth (*Ulp. Dig.* 14.3.5.4; *Juv.* 7.221). Above all, however, they appear as sellers of food, including fresh fruit and vegetables, and prepared food, such as bread, sausages, pastries, and cooked chickpeas (e.g. *Lucil.* 5.221–2; *Cic. Pis.* 67.10; *Div.* 2.40.84; *Ulp. Dig.* 14.3.5.9; *Mart.* 1.41.5–10; Holleran 2016). This reflects the high level of demand for food, since it is probable that only the relatively wealthy in Rome had the space and facilities to prepare and serve food in their own houses, with most people

eating in bars, in the street, or at stalls.

Street traders were active sellers of their wares, and surviving reliefs typically depict them touching their produce and often with an arm raised in a gesture that suggests they are addressing an audience, as in the Ostian relief of a vegetable-seller (Museo Ostiense Inv. 198; Kampen 1981, fig. 40), or the fruit-vendors from Arlon (Musée Luxembourgeois, Inv. 49; Kampen 1981, fig. 30). That sellers could attract crowds is also suggested by the use of the term *circulator* to denote both street traders and entertainers (Holleran 2012, 197–8). Seneca’s description of the cries of food sellers near his apartment in Rome points to the audibility of hawkers in Rome (Sen. *Ep.* 56.2), while poor oratory is likened by our elite authors to the sales patter of street traders (e.g. Quint. *Inst.* 2.4.15, 10.1.8).

In Seneca’s case, the sellers were found at the local bathhouse, and traders congregated at other places where there were concentrations of potential customers, such as temples, circuses, amphitheaters, theaters, and other central locations in Rome. In order to take advantage of such concentrations of consumers and thus maximize the market for their goods, some traders were sent out from businesses based in permanent shops and workshops to sell goods elsewhere. Ulpian, for example, describes a baker who regularly sent a slave out to sell bread in a particular place, and dealers who entrusted clothes to *circitores* (hawkers) to sell (*Dig.* 14.3.5.9, 14.3.5.4). Retailers also made sales in private homes, calling either speculatively or on invitation. Horace, for instance, satirizes a young man who invites retailers to his house directly (Hor. *Sat.* 2.3.225–30), while the hawker who calls speculatively on the houses of the wealthy is a stock figure in Roman comedy and satire (e.g. Plaut. *Aul.* 505–22; Hor. *Carm.* 3.6.30; *Ep.* 17.20; Ov. *Ars Am.* 1. 421–8; *Rem.* 305–6).

Auctions

As we have seen, auction sales could be held in *macella*, and there were also formal auction halls in Rome, the most notable of which were the Atria Licinia, located close to the entrance of the Republican *macellum* (Cic. *Quinct.* 12.25; Serv. *Ad Aen.* 1.726), although street corners, porticoes, arcades, open spaces, wharves – in short, almost any public space – could be used for such transactions (e.g. Hor. *Epist.* 1.7.64–6; *Ars P.* 419; Quint. *Inst.* 11.2.24; Juv. 8.95). The courtyards of *horrea* could also be used for the wholesale auction of the goods stored in the surrounding warehouses (DeLaine 2005, 43–5). Selling goods by auction not only ensured that sales were transparent, but also enabled the best market price for goods to be achieved. Auctions were particularly useful for the sale of second-hand or antique goods, as setting a price for such goods was difficult. The contents of

the estates of the deceased or bankrupt were, for example, very often broken up and sold at auction (e.g. Plin. *Ep.* 8.18.11). Auctions of personal effects could also be held to raise money in times of economic difficulty (e.g. Cic. *Agr.* 1.7; *Verr.* 2.4.11; Juv. 8.95), and in Rome, even the emperors themselves occasionally auctioned their own possessions or those of their predecessors or enemies in order to raise revenue (e.g. App. *B Civ.* 3.23; Suet. *Calig.* 38.4; Cass. Dio 51.4.7, 59.21.5–6, 74.5; SHA *Marc.* 17.4–5, 21.9; *Pert.* 7.8–11, 8).

Conclusions

The retail sector in Rome was diverse, reflecting both the diversity of the products sold and the social and economic diversity of the consumers served. Certain forms of retail are particularly suited to the sale of certain commodities; fresh fruit and vegetables, for example, by necessity have a quick turnover and are particularly suited to sale in markets or by street traders, while bulkier goods or those which require further processing or extensive storage space are more suited to sale from fixed locations. Different modes of retail can also serve different consumers; markets and street traders, for example, typically have lower overheads than retailers based in fixed shops and can charge correspondingly lower prices for their goods, suiting poorer consumers in Rome. Similarly, although many people in Rome consumed meat, wealthier consumers could purchase fresh meat in the *macella*, having both the money and the appropriate cooking facilities, while poorer consumers very often relied on cookshops or bars, where they could purchase cheaper cuts of meat, ready to eat in the form of stews or sausages and the like. Encompassing shops, workshops, permanent and periodic markets, auction sales, street traders, and hawkers, the retail sector was a thriving part of the urban economy, providing a living for a significant proportion of Rome's population. Shops, markets, and stalls were also key venues for social interaction, with men and women mingling freely as both buyers and sellers, and prices typically arrived at through haggling (e.g. Sen. *Ben.* 6.17.1; *Ep.* 42.8; Apul. *Met.* 1.24). When we add in the cries of sellers, the temporary stalls, and the painted facades of *tabernae* advertising their wares, it becomes clear that retail must have been one of the most vibrant aspects of life in the city.

Guide to Further Reading

The only current study that deals specifically with all aspects of the retail trade in Rome is Holleran 2012, although see also Chapter 9 in Stambaugh 1988 for a discussion of commerce in Rome. For studies of the topography of

trade in Rome, see Morel 1987; 2001 and Papi 2002. For the social and economic world of the artisans and retailers who worked in *tabernae*, see Tran 2013. DeLaine 2005 provides an excellent discussion of the commercial landscape of Ostia, which is also relevant to imperial Rome. The best detailed study of *macella* remains De Ruyt 1983, but in English, see Frayn 1993. Frayn also discusses periodic markets and fairs, as does De Ligt 1993, although with a wider focus on the Roman empire. For street traders and hawkers in Rome, see Holleran 2011 and 2016; also 2013 for women and retail in Roman Italy. On auctions, the most recent and thorough discussion is that of García Morcillo 2005, but in English, see Jones 2006, 79–91, particularly for the role of bankers in auctions, and Rauh 1989 for an introduction to the role of the auctioneer at Rome.

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CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

The Construction Industry

Janet DeLaine

Construction sites must have been a constant feature of the city of Rome from at least the early second century BCE. The erection of great public buildings and of lavish houses bearing the names of their founders, driven in part by the competitive desires of the political and economic élites, was matched by the construction of high-density housing and commercial properties to accommodate and provision Rome's unprecedented population. In addition there was an almost constant need for restoration or reconstruction work, brought about by the sequence of fires, floods, and earthquakes that Rome was prone to in antiquity, to say nothing of the effects of old age or shoddy construction (cf. Strabo *Geog.* 5.3.7). To satisfy all of this building activity demanded a specialized workforce with a wide range of diverse skills in construction, a vast pool of casual unskilled labor, and a ready supply of building materials, tools and other equipment. While it is impossible to put a firm figure on any of these, recent estimates suggest as much as 20 % of the adult male population may have been involved in some way in the construction industry, a figure paralleled in later historical periods (DeLaine 1997, 198–201).

The Development of a Construction Industry in Rome

While construction was certainly a constant in life at Rome, it is not at all easy to identify the point at which it is possible to talk about a “construction industry”. The term “industry” suggests a fairly large-scale, widespread, productive phenomenon involving a developed level and variety of relevant skills, some degree of structured organization with continuity beyond the life of an individual, and a commercial operation beyond the scope of the household. Evidence for this might include sophisticated materials and complex building techniques and their standardization, legal codes and contracts relating to construction, individuals who name building trades as their occupation, and formal associations of builders. According to much later sources, the *fabri tignuarii* (literally, carpenters, but by the imperial period used for builders in general) were one of the groups of tradesmen already identified at Rome in the regal period, although their chief function under the

constitution of Servius Tullius was said to be as military engineers (Livy 1.43; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 7.59). The main indirect indication of a construction industry, as opposed to just the existence of men with engineering and building skills, is the way in which, from the fourth century onwards, public building was let out to contract by the censors and other magistrates (Livy 5.23.7, 6.32.1–2; Strong 1968; Anderson 1997, 79–85; Steinby 2012), which presupposes at the very least contractors (*redemptores*) who could organize large-scale public works, and a workforce to carry them out.

The scale of public building increased greatly in the second century BCE, to the point that, according to Polybius (6.13.3), it became the chief expense on the Roman treasury. Indeed, in 179 BCE the entire state income for a year was voted to the censors for public building over the next *lustrum* (five-year period) (Livy 40.46.16). The actual construction was let out to contract by auction, the most expensive contracts being for large-scale infrastructure works such as roads, bridges, aqueducts, and sewers. This massive outlay on public construction during the second century BCE also coincides with the extensive use of building techniques which required specialized labor, another indication of the existence of a developed construction industry. While the basic building techniques in the city of Rome were the typical ones of the ancient Mediterranean, including mud-brick, timber framing, and thatch, it was ashlar construction with tiled roofs which required the most skill, in quarrying and shaping the stone, working the timber into trusses, and in maneuvering the heavy elements into place. The harder the stone, the more complex the elements (voussoirs of arches or column capitals, for example), or the wider the span of the roof, the more skilled manpower was required, especially for the basilicas and porticoes that were such a feature of the second century BCE in Rome. This was also the period of the earliest marble temples in Rome, which required material, and almost certainly skilled workmen, imported from the Greek east (Bernard 2010), another indication of increasing sophistication in construction.

Where Rome differed from many other urban centers of the period, however, was in the development of what is usually called concrete, a strong and durable rubble construction using a mortar of lime and *harena fossicia* (literally pit-sand: Vitruvius *De Arch.* 2.4.1), an ashy volcanic deposit (Italian: *pozzolana*). This mortared rubble could be used for foundations, walls and vaulted roofs, with much less need for specialized labor, as even lime was a commonplace agricultural product. While the origin of the technique is still a matter of debate, it is traditionally thought to have been first used sometime in the third century BCE (e.g. Lugli 1957), while the most recent study suggested it was not used for walls until the later second century BCE. The most impressive example from this period is the so-called Porticus Aemilia in the Emporium district; nearly 500 meters long by 90 meters wide and divided into 50 bays covered by parallel barrel vaults each with a span of over 8

meters, its function, precise identification, and exact date are currently the subject of debate (Cozza and Tucci 2006; Arata and Felici 2011). This sophisticated exploitation of a completely new and – in its day – experimental material and technique, reinforces the identification of the second century as one of the key periods for the emergence of a construction industry at Rome, at least in relation to public buildings.

The situation is less clear in terms of private buildings. Although the archaeological evidence is slim, Vitruvius (*De Arch.* 2.8.8–9, 16–17) looks back to a time when mud brick was used for domestic architecture at Rome, something that was forbidden in his day (the early Augustan period), being replaced by the narrower mortared rubble walls needed for multistoried apartment blocks to house Rome's expanding population. This suggests that by the end of the second century BCE private building was probably in the hands of professional builders as well. Coarelli (2000) has also argued that this is the period in which fired brick began to be used extensively in Rome, a material that, like other clay products including roof tiles, requires a specialized workforce for its production. Cicero provides the best evidence for private building contracts in the late Republic (see Martin 1989: 53–7), but Cato (*Agr.* 14) suggests this was already happening in the second century BCE, albeit in a rural context. Thus, although the legal codes on private building contracts in Rome reflect the conditions of the early empire, there is no reason to suppose that this was not simply a continuation of practice which went back to the first or second century BCE.

From the first century BCE there is increasing evidence for individuals working in construction. A few architects and contractors are known by name, mainly thanks again to Cicero (Anderson 1997, 15–39, 95–107), while a travertine funerary relief of perhaps 40–30 BCE gives us the freed brothers C. Gavius Dardanus and C. Gavius Salvius, both *fabri tignuarii* (Kleiner 1977, Cat. 82, fig. 82). Important structural changes which affected the industry, as well as a substantial increase in scale, were undoubtedly related to the numerous and lavish building projects of Augustus and his followers such as Agrippa. Augustus reorganized the administration of public building, creating the *curatores operum publicorum*, who oversaw the construction of public buildings and temples either using their permanent workforce, particularly for day-to-day maintenance, or let the work out to contract (Suet. *Aug.* 37; Anderson 1997, 88–90). In 7 BCE the *fabri tignuarii* were also reorganized into a *collegium* (association) with a hierarchical and quasi-military structure (Panciera 1981, 271, 276). It is not surprising that this is the same period in which Vitruvius was writing his *On architecture*, the only complete architectural treatise to come down to us from classical antiquity and which includes a whole book on construction.

This rapid expansion of the construction industry also coincides with major developments in building technology. These include: the move to a better

form of *harena fossicia* (Jackson *et al.* 2007, 50); developments in the facings of mortared rubble construction, with the replacement of the small irregular stones of *opus incertum* by the regular diamond-shaped blocks of *opus reticulatum*, and the start of extensive use of brick facing (Vitr. *De Arch.* 2.8.1–2; Coarelli 1977; Torelli 1995); the first use of weight-graded rubble and structural iron in vaulting (Lancaster 2005a, 59–60, 115–16); the expansion of brick and tile production, with the first known involvement of members of the senatorial elite (Steinby 1982; Manacorda 2000, 140; Filippi and Stanco 2005, 171–5); and the first really wide-scale use of marble. All this suggests a flourishing, active and innovative construction industry, which continued on much the same lines for the next two centuries. One of the few changes appears to have been the creation of the *opera Caesaris*, responsible for the emperor's own building projects (and after Augustus that meant most public building), in existence by the reign of Titus (79–81 CE), but which seems to have operated in much the same way as the *curatores*, letting work out on contract.

Contractors and builders

As we have seen, building projects, particularly for public works, were in the hands of *redemptores*, or contractors, who had overall control of the construction process (Anderson 1997, 103–12). While no example of an actual building contract exists from Rome, the *lex parieti faciundo Puteolana* (*CIL* 12.698 = *CIL* 10.1781 = Dessau, *ILS* 5317; Anderson 1997, 74–5) of 105 BCE records the terms for creating a new entrance to a public building in the Roman colony of Puteoli. The contract stipulated the precise location, design, dimensions, materials, building work to be done, and finishing. A completion date is given as well as a payment schedule, the first part of which required the contractors to give sureties to safeguard the public investment; the final payment was made only after the finished work had been approved by a committee of senior town councilors. Although the specifications may have been provided by an architect, those approving the work needed to understand the language and nature of construction, which is one of the contexts where Vitruvius's *On architecture* would have been invaluable. In turn the contractor had to be experienced in the building trades, good at organization, and to have access to substantial funds, his own or his patron's. Contracting for large-scale imperial projects would have required exceptional skills and resources, and for freedmen at least patronage at the highest level, not just to supply recommendations but also to provide the necessary securities (cf. Steinby 1983). A possible example is Tiberius Claudius Onesimus, a freedman of Claudius or Nero, who was a contractor for the emperor's building works (*redemptor operum Caesaris*) under the Flavians (*CIL*

Two quite independent pieces of evidence cast light on one particular area in which some *redemptores* had particular expertise in the use of specialist equipment. Horace (*Epist.* 2.2.72–3) provides us with a cameo portrait of a *redemptor* hurrying along with his mules and porters, in charge of a large crane for hoisting blocks of stone and massive timbers. Just such a crane is placed in a prominent position in the famous relief from the elaborate, richly decorated, and clearly expensive funerary monument of the Haterii, which Coarelli (1979) has connected with the inscription of the *redemptor* Q. Haterius Tychicus (*CIL* 6.607), arguably a freedman of an important senatorial family who may have worked on the Flavian amphitheater and other important imperial projects. While lifting devices with their ropes and pulleys were an essential part of the infrastructure of most building projects, for large imperial building projects using many columns or made of ashlar blocks, or requiring large roof trusses, special more complex machines and components were needed. The prominence of the crane in the relief suggests that it had a strong symbolic importance for the owner, and may represent a significant investment and have required a particular expertise beyond that of the ordinary builder. Similarly, expertise in the complex carpentry needed for the formwork and centering of large vaults and experience in laying and decentering them successfully must also have recommended certain contractors for public works. Cicero's account of Verres' rebuilding of the Temple of Castor and Pollux in the Roman Forum suggests that this was already the case in the late Republican period (see Ducret 2016).

While some *redemptores* presumably began as military engineers, as Vitruvius himself had done, their main proving ground was in the civil building trade as we can see with Onesimus, who was also one of the chief magistrates of the association (*collegium*) of builders (*fabri tignuarii*). Inscriptions relating to this *collegium*, the largest known in Rome with over 1,380 members, provide considerable information about builders in Rome over a long period from the Augustan reorganization to the beginning of the fourth century CE (Waltzing 1895–1900: 1896, II, 115–21; 1900, IV, 21–2; Pietrangeli 1939; Pearse 1975; Pearse 1976–77; Panciera 1981). By the mid empire at least, the members were organized in a quasi-military fashion into 60 *decuriae* (cohorts) of 22 men, each with its own officials (*decuriones*), the whole *collegium* being under the control of six senior magistrates (*magistri quinquennales*), elected for a five-year period (*lustrum*) from the heads of the *decuriae*. There are also inscriptions referring to secretaries (*scribae*, *CIL* 6.1060) who would have helped keep the records. Rather than representing all those actively engaged in building including common laborers, the members of the *collegium* were most likely to have been master builders, skilled craftsmen, or entrepreneurs with good knowledge of their trade, as they had to pay a membership fee. Some at least of the senior members of the *collegium*

must have been men of considerable wealth. This is most clearly demonstrated by their funerary monuments, such as that of the freeborn L. Cincius Martialis, *quinquennalis* and head of the 10th *decuria*, who provided a *columbarium* with 32 places for all current and potential future members of his *decuria* (CIL 6.9405).

Although most of the inscriptions give us little more than lists of magistrates and members, and sometimes the number of the *lustrum* providing a date, even this small amount of evidence helps throw important light on these master builders. Starting from the very first *lustrum* of the Augustan period, most of the names of the *fabri tignuarii* are arguably those of freedmen, as is normal in the *collegia* of Rome, although there are also some who include their filiation and are therefore indubitably freeborn; of these, several have Greek *cognomina*, suggesting that they too may have been of recent servile descent (Pearse 1975). Many carry the clan names (*nomina*) of past emperors or important senatorial families of long standing at Rome, whose descendants or freedmen are well-known and common in the city. The surviving inscriptions also, however, include a high number of clan names otherwise unattested, or extremely rare, at Rome. Some were possibly freedmen of more recent members of the senatorial order, such as Hoenius Xenophon (CIL 6.1060), of a family mostly connected with Umbria but which provided consuls in the mid to late second century CE; the success of the freedman here may have been in some measure attributable to the power and wealth of the patron. Others appear to represent individuals who had come to Rome from elsewhere in Italy or the provinces to seek their fortune, such as L. Orcivius Martialis (CIL 6.10300), whose clan is otherwise known almost entirely from Praeneste, east of Rome.

Wealthy and highly placed patrons may have been responsible for training many skilled building workers within their households. According to Plutarch (*Crass.* 2.4–5), in the mid first century BCE Crassus purchased as many as 500 slave architects and builders whom he employed in redeveloping buildings bought up at low cost for profit. While the scale of Crassus's *familia* of builders may have been exceptional (if indeed the number has been transmitted accurately), there is epigraphic evidence for builders in the funerary monuments of other senatorial families, most notably in that of the T. Statilii Tauri, whose fortunes were founded by Augustus's close ally, consul in 37 and 26 BCE, urban praetor in 16 BCE, and the man responsible for erecting the first permanent amphitheater in Rome (c.f. DeLaine 2000, 121–2). One T. Statilius Tauri lib. Antiochus clearly went into successful business himself and had his own funerary plot complete with marble plaque (CIL 6.9412–15). During the first century CE, in addition to Antiochus, we find several other T. Statilii among the building trades, including three in the same *decuria* of the *fabri tignuarii* (CIL 6.9405), not all freed by the senatorial family. Since one is the son of a freedman, these arguably represent a

continuing tradition of building among the descendants and freedmen of the slave builders of the Augustan period, which may even have extended to the end of the second century, where two freed Statilii appear among the *fabri tignuarii* at nearby Ostia (*CIL* 14.4569). This suggests that builders were not trained just in large elite households, but often by successful former slaves established in their own businesses after manumission. The situation is also recorded in the legal codes; *Digest* (17.1.26.8), for example, records a builder (*faber*) who bought and trained a slave acting on the express instructions of a friend. Such may have been the case with the freeborn C. Fictorius Flaccus, *quinquennalis* of the *fabri tignuarii* in 2 BCE – 3 CE, who was arguably the former owner of the freedman C. Fictorius C. I. Phronimus, *quinquennalis* in 44–48 CE, although the time difference suggests that a freed slave of a freedman is perhaps more likely (Pearse 1975, 113). It was also not uncommon for a junior member of a family to be given training in the same way; the monument of L. Cincius Martialis, noted above, provides an example of a true family business, as L. Cincius, son of Martialis, appears both as a member of the *decuria* and as one of his heirs.

The Organization of Construction

Leaving aside the supposed 500 architects and builders in the *familia* of Crassus, most of the sources suggest that the units which made up the construction industry tended to be small and flexible, comprising perhaps no more than a master builder and 4–6 skilled workers who could cover all aspects of ordinary construction. While carpentry skills were always essential, as much for vaulted concrete as for timber roofed structures, and skilled stone masons for any building involving columns, by the second century CE most of the building workforce including those laying the fine facings in brick or reticulate could have been trained quickly on site and might be considered (in modern terms) semi-skilled, while much of the work was simple laboring. In Roman mortared rubble construction there was a lot of fetching and carrying, mixing mortar, filling in the core, and providing materials for those laying the facing materials. Most of the tasks were repetitive, and easily learnt. In addition, materials came in small units, or like mortar could be subdivided into man-loads, so that little heavy equipment like cranes was needed. In one of the few representations of Roman builders at work, a fourth century wall painting from the Tomb of Trebius Iustus in Rome, there are five workmen, wearing the short tunic of the slave or laborer: two bricklayers stand on scaffolding on either side of a brick-faced concrete wall, while one laborer brings up a load of mortar in half an amphora, another carries a load of bricks or rubble in a basket, and a third mixes mortar or slakes lime, using a long-

handled hoe (Marucchi 1911). Such a group might have made up the basic unit of the workforce under the direction of a *faber tignuarius*, although some of the unskilled tasks may have been taken on by casual workers. Not surprisingly, the ordinary free poor working as day laborers on ordinary building sites are rarely mentioned in the ancient sources, but the practice is clearly attested in the legal texts as normal practice (*Dig.* 45.1.137.3).

There were several economic advantages of mortared rubble construction in addition to the reduced need for highly skilled labor. This alone made it a cheaper option compared with ashlar, so that even a plain wall in tuff might have cost perhaps three to four times as much as an equivalent one in *opus incertum* or in *opus reticulatum*, and a travertine or limestone one more than twice that again (DeLaine 2000a). The rapidity with which mortar made with pit-sand gained strength was another economic advantage, since it allowed buildings to be put up quickly without compromising on strength. This has been confirmed by very recent finds of dates painted on the brick face of the “library” in the early second century CE Baths of Trajan, which indicate that the 15-meter-high complex walls of the semicircular building were erected in only two months (Volpe and Rossi 2012). A different kind of economic advantage came from the fact that while mortared rubble walls could be at least as strong structurally as solid ashlar ones, they did not require freshly quarried or prime quality material. Since the strength is mainly in the mortar, the material of the core could include waste from the dressing of blocks, pieces of poor quality, damaged or unwanted ashlar blocks, or indeed any durable redundant materials such as fragments of large terracotta pots, broken roof-tiles, smashed-up pieces of flooring or thick wall plaster. The speed of construction and ability to absorb waste materials made mortared rubble an ideal material for rapid reconstruction after a natural disaster such as fire or earthquake, as after the Great Fire of 64 CE.

Despite these advantages, it is unlikely that any one member of the *fabri tignuarii* had a sufficiently large body of workers, whether slave, freed, or free, to take on major imperial building projects by themselves, even with the help of casual labor. Estimates suggest that the Pantheon required something in the order of 250 masons and laborers for 7–8 years, while the Baths of Caracalla needed 4–7,000 men (DeLaine 2016; DeLaine 1997, 191–3). The skilled labor was presumably provided by a number of these building “firms” working together, either hired independently for piece work, as Lancaster (1998; 2000) has suggested for the Markets of Trajan, or possibly as a group. One source of such collaborative ventures could have been the *collegium* of the *fabri tignuarii*. Although scholars are divided on the subject of to what extent the *collegia* had any function in relation to actual work practices, the inevitable social ties between members of a *collegium*, and particularly in this case within the closer-knit groupings of the *decuriae*, must have made the forming of consortia easier. If each of the 22 members of a *decuria*

represented a “firm” of only 4–5 skilled workmen, they could, with an equal number of day laborers, have furnished the basic workforce required for the Pantheon. As the heads of the *decuriae* appear to have held the position for life, they would have provided both continuity and a fount of experience, which would have facilitated cooperative ventures.

This is one possible source of the uniformity of building practice, especially surprising in relation to concrete construction given the sheer amount of building in imperial Rome, as individual building “firms” might have worked together in different combinations on projects of different sizes. In addition, a number of elements of standardization in building practices and materials such as reticulate pieces or bricks simplified construction and meant that builders could move easily from one project to another. In general construction, walls were commonly 1.5 or 2 Roman feet (0.44 or 0.59 meters) thick, the same size as the large square bricks (*sesquipediales* and *bipediales*) used also for levelling courses at the foot of walls and at the springing of vaults, and for arches and relieving arches. They were also used in brick-faced mortared rubble for through courses (so-called bonding courses) set regular distances of 3 to 5 Roman feet apart, which not only had structural advantages, but also allowed the progress of construction to be easily monitored, especially on large projects. Sites employing hundreds, or even thousands, of workers every day also required high levels of organizational skills, not only in terms of overall coordination, which was presumably the task of the architect(s) and/or contractor(s), but also in relation to individual tasks or areas of construction. Historically, the rate of supervision for work-gangs is 1 in 10 (c.f. DeLaine 1997, 204), but a large site would require further levels of organization above this. The military-like hierarchy of the *fabri tignuarii* may not only reflect their supposed origins as military engineers, but also the way that building sites themselves were organized.

Major public and imperial projects, and the luxury dwellings of the wealthiest classes, created demands which must have gone beyond the skills of the ordinary building “firm”. Particularly from the Augustan period onwards, the use of marble and the increasing adoption of the Corinthian order led, perhaps for the first time, to the permanent presence of craftsmen in Rome who specialized in this type of work, and who may be identifiable with the *marmorarii* of inscriptions (see Calabi Limentani 1961). As we have seen, columns had always required specialized lifting equipment and the skills to use it, but the shift towards monolithic column shafts, some weighing 80–100 tonnes, or the building of the Columns of Trajan and Marcus Aurelius (Lancaster 1999), created particular problems which must have taxed the ingenuity of the most able architects and engineers, as well as needing a skilled and experienced workforce to work the ropes and operate the machines. The scale of the workforce is suggested by the 800 men and 120 horses over four months that it took to move the 500-tonne Vatican obelisk,

brought over from Egypt originally to adorn the circus of the emperor Caligula, a few hundred meters in the 16th century. In this case the architect called on the expertise of the navy, and it is certainly feasible that for these special projects the emperor did the same, given that a detachment of sailors from the fleet at Misenum were employed to work the awnings in the Flavian Amphitheater. Such feats of engineering were not only exceptional and rare, but were outside of the normal parameters of the construction industry, invoking a command of unthinkable resources and an ability to supersede nature which characterized imperial power (cf. DeLaine 2002, 213–15).

The Supply of Building Materials

Any construction project depends on a reliable supply of building materials for successful and timely completion, yet the literary and epigraphic sources tell us little about the organization of the supply of building materials for the city of Rome. Most of the basic building materials of Rome were reasonably local (DeLaine 1995; Jackson and Marra 2006), an important aspect, as transport was a major element in their cost. Two volcanic systems to the north and south of Rome provided the various volcanic tuffs which formed the bulk of the cut stone construction of the Republic and the rubble for the later concrete. These tuffs are generally poor in quality, their strength decreasing rapidly when wet (Jackson and Marra 2006, 425, Fig. 10), but they are also easy to quarry and light to transport, making them very economical. The tuffs local to the city itself are particularly friable, and as the power of Rome expanded stronger tuffs from further afield were brought into use, such as the *lapis albanum* from the Alban Hills.

None of the tuffs, however, provided the strength or durability of the kind of hard limestones and marbles used by the Greeks for temples and public architecture, and their natural grey to yellow-brown coloring was not attractive. The solution was travertine, a porous whitish limestone caused by the interaction of sulfurous springs and the limestone of the sub-Apenine mountains east of Rome at Tibur (modern Tivoli), used for its greater structural strength but also its aesthetic appeal, becoming the stone of choice for the façades of major public buildings such as the Theater of Marcellus (13 BCE) and the Flavian Amphitheater (80 CE). By the Augustan period, Strabo was able to consider Rome well-supplied with three types of building stone (*Geog.*5.3.11), all of which could be transported economically by water along the River Anio into the Tiber just above Rome: a “red stone,” probably the common *tufo lionato* from the eastern outskirts of the modern city; the harder *lapis gabinus* from near Gabii, used for the enclosure wall of the Forum of

Augustus; and travertine.

Other essential building materials were lime and aggregate (the components of mortar), roof-tiles and brick, and timber. The pit-sand was another product of the southern volcanic system which produced most of the tuffs, the most commonly used deposits being east and south of the city (Jackson *et al.* 2007), so that transport had to be by road rather than by water. In the late Republic there were open-cast quarries just outside the Servian walls on the Esquiline, on the site of the later Horti Lamiani (Serlorenzi 2014). The best lime for the mortar was produced from the limestone of the sub-Apennine chain running east of Rome, including behind Tibur, or south where the limestone met the coast at Terracina, from where it could be shipped to Rome. While there is ample clay suitable for roof-tiles and brick in the lower parts of the city itself, by the imperial period production was spread mainly along the Tiber valley north of Rome as far as Orte, some 60 kilometers upstream, with the river providing yet again the most convenient transport route. Strabo (*Geog.* 5.3.7) also notes that Rome in his day was well-supplied by river with building timber, presumably brought down to the Tiber from the high Apennines (cf. Ulrich 2007, 263–8).

Specialized materials could come from much further away. As early as the first century BCE, lightweight scoria from Vesuvius on the Bay of Naples was brought to Rome for use in vault construction (Lancaster 2005a, 59–63). And when long timbers – essential elements of large-scale construction – became scarce in the vicinity, these had to be brought in from much further away, including possibly the Alps (Kuniholm 2002, 236–7). Just as important, but much more visible in the archaeological record, is marble, which became the signature material of the emperors. The nearest sources, developed under Julius Caesar and Augustus, were located above Luna (Carrara) in the Apuan Alps, but the colored marbles most closely associated with empire travelled very long distances from Greece and the islands, Asia Minor, North Africa, and Egypt. Large timbers and column shafts also created problems in terms of transport through the city (cf. Juv. 3.254–9), which must have been another area of specialism within the construction industry.

The legal codes suggest that building materials were supplied either by the client or by the builder (Martin 1989, 38–40). Some at least of the quarries and forests would have been on private estates, increasingly in the hands of the senatorial élite at Rome. Originally these would mainly have served the estate itself, which seems to be the case with our only ancient description of lime production in the second century BCE (Cato, *Agr.* 38). By the early empire these kinds of resources were more likely to be worked for profit, as Varro (*Rust.* 1.2.22) observes with respect to both stone quarries and clay-pits, provided the products could be transported to Rome economically. At least in the case of the clay-pits, this involvement went to the highest levels of society, starting with the Augustan senators Asinius Pollio and Domitius Afer who

were key figures in the early development of the brick industry (Camilli and Taglietti 1994). Other important individuals who, to judge from the frequency with which their names appear in brick-stamps, were major contributors in this field include M. Rutilius Lupus, prefect of Egypt under Trajan, and Hadrian's urban prefect, M. Annius Verus, the grandfather of the emperor Marcus Aurelius. Several of the *curatores operum publicorum* also owned brickfields (Steinby 1983, 220–21), where their public position could have given them a market advantage. In the course of the second century CE, the brickfields supplying Rome increasingly came into the private possession of the emperor and his family, until Caracalla owned virtually all the urban brickfields. This need not mean that the emperor controlled the market or that he used them as an impetus for economic change; he merely exploited them, as did any other member of the senatorial elite (see Lo Cascio 2005).

Although direct evidence is lacking, we can probably assume that stone quarrying operated in much the same way, although it is also possible that, for example, the large tuff quarries along the Anio belonged to the Roman state, as the travertine ones appear to have belonged to Tibur (Mari and Coste 1983, 361–70). The actual quarrying and processing, however, is likely to have been operated through agents or let out on contract. The model for this is again the brick industry, where stamps especially of the second century CE provide evidence for complex relationships between individual landowners, owners of production units, and sometimes actual brick-makers, although scholars do not always agree on the precise nature of these relationships (e.g. Steinby 1993; Aubert 2005). The quantities involved were vast; for example, it has been estimated that the Romans quarried 5.5 million cubic meters of travertine over some four centuries, 100,000 cubic meters of which were needed for the Flavian Amphitheater alone. While we have no way of estimating how much tuff or pit-sand or brick or lime was needed altogether over the centuries to build Rome, various calculations for specific buildings suggest that the extraction and production of the basic building materials alone, without including transport, needed as much as a third of the manpower required to put them in place (e.g. DeLaine 1997, 127–9, 175–9). Given the quantities of materials required for construction, the exploitation was likely to have been highly profitable (DeLaine 1995, 560–61).

The construction industry in the city of Rome, it can thus be argued, had its origins in the Republican practice of letting the construction of public buildings and infrastructure works out to contract. Contractors and craftsmen were therefore very much dependent on the patronage of those members of the senatorial aristocracy who had charge of letting contracts, as was said to be the case with Caius Gracchus (Plut. *C. Gracch.* 6.4, 12.4; App. *B Civ.* 1.3.23); later, the emperors and their close associates took over this role. At the same time, the size and importance of the *fabri tignuarii*, and the apparent wealth of some of its individual members and other contractors, suggest that

the system allowed for – and indeed depended on – private enterprise, particularly in periods of rapid growth and intense building, as under Augustus. Large-scale public construction projects also gave employment to the relatively unskilled urban poor, and to producers and suppliers of building materials. For at least 400 years, from the mid second century BCE to the end of the Severan period, the construction industry was one of the most important economic activities in the city of Rome.

Guide to Further Reading

There is no single comprehensive monograph on the construction industry at Rome, but Anderson (1997) provides a useful introductory synthesis of research to that date, with a particular focus on the textual evidence, to be read with DeLaine 2000b and 2000c. DeLaine's monograph on the Baths of Caracalla (1997) introduced a new approach using the physical remains as evidence for the logistics and economics of construction, focusing on construction as a process. This has been further developed by DeLaine (2000a, b, and 2016), Lancaster (1998, 2000, and 2005b), Bianchi and Meneghini (2002), and Volpe and Rossi (2012), amongst others. The supply of building materials is also the subject of renewed interest, through the geological analyses of Jackson and Marra (2006, 2007), the excavation of quarries (Serlorenzi 2014), and the re-evaluation of the brick supply (the collected papers in Bruun 2005 and in Bukowiecki *et al.* 2015).

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PART VIII
CIVIC LIFE

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

Temples, Colleges, and Priesthoods

Jörg Rüpke

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the important role played by religion in civic life in Rome. We begin by asking what should count as religion in an ancient city. The range of activities, ethos and beliefs, and organization usually associated with the word today will be our starting point. We must, however, be aware that this modern ensemble would not be matched by any ancient concept. How then did the Romans speak about religion? For Rome, one has to consider the term *religio*, and its adjective *religiosus*, words that are attested from the early second century BCE onwards (Plaut. *Asin.* 781, *Curc.* 350, *Merc.* 881). The meaning of the terms ranges from a direct relationship with a deity all the way to a rather generalized sort of religious scruple, an anxiety to do something in the face of divine powers. The word is frequent in Cicero, and here we find an attempt to develop a clear concept of *religio*. Cicero's starting point is the generally shared assumption that gods exist. On that basis, humans are involved in a relationship of *pietas*; this could exist with a human as well as with a divine being, but in the relationship with the latter, *religio* is the natural consequence of *pietas* (see Cic. *Nat. D.* 1.118 f.). This *religio* is not a vague feeling or an "empty fear" like *superstitio* (1.117), but something resulting from the acceptance of the gods as part of one's social order, a human disposition, a habit that finds its expression in corresponding rituals or cultic acts (*cultus deorum*, 1.117). *Religio* is important for the stability of the community (3.94), but it is not an argument and cannot be introduced as such into philosophical discourse (see 1.118). Rather, *religio* is to be tamed by *ratio*, and this is the purpose of Cicero's treatise "On the nature of the gods" (1.1; sim. Cic. *Div.* 2.148–9).

If there is a difference in using "religion," there is an ever larger difference in using "religions." *Religio* above all denotes individual reactions and obligations, and is easily used in the plural *religiones*. What is entirely missing from this notion, however, is the concept of religious groups who define themselves (at least occasionally) as adherents of a certain deity or religious figure (*secta*) and, as a consequence of that attachment, practitioners of a certain way of life (*disciplina*). It was the imperial age that saw this development, which continued up until the late fourth century CE, when the notion of sects received a standard meaning that was very close to our notion

of the plural “religions.” The propensity of Christian theologians to postulate a religious group behind every slightly differing opinion was indicative and even instrumental in this (Rüpke 2010a, b).

It is difficult to assess the expense of religion in Rome but, at times, a good deal of public building concerned the gods’ property, and many expensive public events like circus games or theatre performances were also religious events (see Potter, [Chapter 25](#) in this volume). Religion was, therefore, as important for public communication as for organized “leisure time” activities.

Where could religion be found in the topography of the city? Given the initial definition, three types of places would be relevant. For better ritual communication with the gods, that is, in order to make sure that prayers reached them, and out of gratitude for favors received by them, smaller or larger sanctuaries were built, for use in public or private ceremonies. For some types of cult, a pit to deposit presents or a small altar, to offer and burn a bit of incense or parts of a dove, would be sufficient. In other instances, gods were honored by games that necessitated a theatre or a circus (see next section, “Infrastructure?”). Occasionally, these structures also offered space for the meeting of religious groups. Only very occasionally such associations had meeting places of their own (“Associations”). Finally, the numerous priesthoods, religious specialists for sacrifices, dedications, or divination for one or several gods, might have left traces in architectural form (“Priestly colleges”). But where to start?

The first approach could be attempted in the manner of a tourist, a chance visitor to the city. Coming to Rome, the Capitoline hill crowned by the large temple of Jupiter (more precisely, Iuppiter Optimus Maximus) surely would be one of the landmarks attracting foreigners. In a way, this was a religious center of Rome, but at the same time, the visitor would probably only occasionally run into a crowd assembled here for religious purposes. On the Ides (13th) of September, a special priesthood (by Augustan times called *Septemviri epulonium*) and the senate would assemble for a ritual feeding (*epulum*) of Jupiter. This might have attracted a crowd, as did the procession of the even more prestigious and archaic priests called *flamines maiores* on the Kalends of October, approaching the goddess Fides. On the Ides, the *flamen Dialis*, the priest of Jupiter, sacrificed a white ewe-lamb to Jupiter in his temple, probably the one on the Capitol (Festus p. 372, 8–12 L.; Ov. *Fast.* 1.56). Observers are, however, never mentioned in any account. There should have been a crowd on every Kalends, when – at any rate before the widespread use of written calendars – the number of days until the Nones, either five or seven, was publicly announced (*kalatio*) by the *pontifex minor* in the Curia Calabra on the Capitol (Varro, *Ling.* 6.27). On the Nones itself another, much more prestigious priest, the *rex sacrorum*, stood on the highest point of the Capitol, the Arx, and announced the festivals of the current month. Again, we have no idea whether there were any spectators at such a

ceremony.

Certainly, the tourist would have run into people performing religion at all times. With irony and disgust, the Stoic philosopher Seneca tells us about it in his treatise *De superstitione*, “On superstition,” composed around the middle of the first century CE. In one of the few fragments preserved, Seneca describes the mix of people you might encounter:

But if ever you go up on the Capitol, it will make you feel ashamed just to see the crazy performances put on for the public’s benefit, all represented as duties by light-hearted lunacy. So Jupiter has a special attendant to announce callers and another one to tell him the time; one to wash him and another to oil him, who in fact only mimes the movements with his hands. Juno and Minerva have special women hairdressers, who operate some distance away, not just from the temple, but from the statue, moving their fingers like hair-cutters, they have women who hold mirrors. There are men who call the gods for their court appointments, others read their juridical interventions to the gods or teach them their cases. There used to be an old, decrepit but very experienced pantomime artist who put on his act every day on the Capitol as if the gods were enjoying the show of a man who those human spectators have deserted. Every type of artisanship has settled down there working for the immortal gods (Sen. *superst* fr. 36 Haase = fr. 69 Vottero = Aug. *civ.* 6.10, trsl. in Beard, North and Price 1998, 2, 234, translation supplemented by author).

These are acid remarks, levied at traditional cult as well as individual radicalization. It is difficult to fully visualize the situation. Were all or some people prevented from direct access to the statue, hence had to operate from afar? The description would at least suggest the doors of the Capitoline temple and its three *cellae* for the individual gods were open. In many other cases access might have been much more restricted. The evidence is anecdotal only. We know from Varro’s dialogue on agriculture that a custodian had to be fetched to explain a map of Italy in the temple of Ceres (Varro, *Rust.* 1.2.1–2). Much later, Tertullian attacks the pagans for demanding entrance fees for the mere visiting of temples (Tert. *Ad nat.* 1.10.24; sim. *Apol.* 13.6) but this might be a conscious misinterpretation of the presence of money-boxes into which coins could be thrown as small sacrifices (Tert. *Apol.* 42.8; see Dondin-Payre and Kaufmann-Heinimann 2009). Of course, you would not approach the gods without any token of cult (see Cic. *Leg.* 2.25) and you might have to bribe the custodian (*aedituus*) in order to approach the statue closely (see Sen. *Ep.* 41.1). Any material, sacrifices, crowns, even hot water, would have to be paid for – our basis for such a generalization, however, remains small (*CIL* 6.820; fragmentary).

Cult was invited to be performed in every temple on a particular day or periods of supplications. However, our knowledge about practical procedures

remains vague. In contrast to the many temples known, custodians are attested only for about a dozen of them (see Rüpke 2008). Some of the locations of intensive cult in the form of votives, that is, miniatures of cattle, replications of bodily parts healed, tokens of newborns, or of the grateful giver, totally escaped the literary record and are known from archaeological findings only, for instance a site on the north-east slopes of the Palatine close to the (later) colossal statue of Nero and the Arch of Constantine. Here the college of the ritual trumpeters (*aeneatores*) had a meeting place and dedicated a group of statues to the imperial family in the early empire (Panella 1996).

How did people know about the sanctuaries and the specific powers of a god? Coins were mass media, but could be misleading. Janus, for example, was frequently displayed on Roman coins from early on but, as far as we know, did not possess a substantial sanctuary. Similarly, it was a political concept like Concordia rather than Castor and Pollux (still dominating the remains of the Forum Romanum) that was prominent on coinage. Thus, we have to look for other modes of attracting attention to a sanctuary. The staging of a popular festival would be such a strategy. Surely, the temple of Cybele on the Palatine must have been well-known for its Megalensian games. Integration into processional routes must have been a second way. And for the rest, spread by word of mouth was probably ubiquitous.

Infrastructure?

Within the urban landscape of Rome, there was a mixture of sacred places of “international”?, regional, and purely local importance, such as those in neighborhoods (see Table 24.1). Furthermore, the “international” (or at least super-regional) level would include monumental buildings like the Capitoline temple of Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva (and its multiple rebuildings) as well as probably very tiny structures, as in the case of the sanctuary of Aesculapius on the Tiber island (a courtyard with rooms? – see MAR 42). All of these sanctuaries were the results of contingent, situational, sometimes individual decisions. An important source for the establishment of temples were – economically speaking – the decisions of victorious generals to allocate parts of their booty to the gods (which they had to share with their soldiers and the public treasury), or – religiously speaking – the fulfilment of vows made on the battlefield (Rüpke 1990, Orlin 1997). Between 302 BCE, when a temple to Salus vowed in 311 was dedicated on the Quirinal Hill, and 44 BCE, when Augustus’s father, Julius Caesar, was honored by the decision to build a temple to Clementia Caesaris, at least 76 temples were erected at Rome (Ziolkowski 1992, 187–8; Rüpke 2006, 219). These temples were built on

public land, dedicated by ordinary magistrates or specifically appointed magistrates (*duoviri aedibus dedicandis*). Ideally, their cult was maintained by public funds, usually financed by the regular return from renting out plots of land (Bodei Giglione 1977). Apart from booty, extraordinary public money (e.g. penalties, as in the case of Venus Obsequens) or the decision of the Senate to ward off threatening signs called prodigies (as in the case of Apollo, according to tradition) would form the basis of the decision to build.

Table 24.1 Alphabetical list of Republican temples.

(Reproduced from *The Blackwell Companion to the Roman Republic*, edited by Rosenstein and Morstein-Marx, 219. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2006).

Aesculapius (292)
Bellona (296)
Bona Dea (2nd century)
Castor and Pollux (2nd century?)
Concordia (216)
Consus (272)
Diana (179)
Faunus (194)
Felicitas (151)
Felicitas Feronia (225)
Flora (240)
Flora (3rd century)
Fons (231)
Fors Fortuna (293)
Fortuna Equestris (173)
Fortuna huiusce diei (101)
Fortuna huiusce diei (168)
Fortuna Primigenia (194)
Fortuna Publica (241)
Hercules (3rd century)
Hercules Invictus (292)
Hercules Magnus custos (223)
Hercules Musarum (189)
Honos (233)
Honos (3rd century)
Honos and Virtus (222)
Honos and Virtus (early 1st century)
Hora Quirini (3rd century)
Ianus (260)
Iuno Curritis (241)
Iuno Regina (179)
Iuno Sospita (194)
Iuppiter Fulgur (3rd century)

Iuppiter Invictus (c. 2nd century)
 Iuppiter Libertas (246)
 Iuppiter Stator (294)
 Iuppiter Stator and Iuno Regina (146)
 Iuppiter Victor (295)
 Iuturna (242/1)
 Iuventas (191)
 Lares (3rd century)
 Lares Permarini (179)
 Luna (3rd century)
 Mars (138)
 Mars Invictus (2nd century?)
 Mater Magna (191)
 Mens (215)
 Minerva (263/2)
 Neptunus (257)
 Ops (3rd century)
 Ops Opifera (250)
 Pales (267)
 Penates (3rd century)
 Pietas (181)
 Pietas (91)
 Portunus (292)
 Sol and Luna (3rd century)
 Sol Indiges (3rd century)
 Spes and Fides (258/7)
 Summanus (276)
 Tellus (268)
 Tempestates (259)
 Tiberinus (3rd century)
 Vediovis (192)
 Vediovis (194)
 Venus Erucina (181)
 Venus Erucina (215)
 Venus Genetrix (46)
 Venus Libitina (status as temple uncertain: 3rd century)
 Venus Obsequens (295)
 Venus Verticordia (114)
 Venus Victrix Honos and Virtus and Felicitas (55)
 Vica Pota (3rd century)
 Victoria Virgo (193)
 Vulcanus (252)
 Vortumnus (264)

Collectively, these architectural ensembles were an important means of

demonstrating a city's piety, power, and wealth, as much to the inhabitants as to visitors. The last decades of the second century BCE also saw enormous building projects in the cities surrounding Rome, for example, the monumental ramps leading up to the temple of Fortuna at Praeneste or the enormous temple complex just outside Tusculum. In such a manner, the rivals of Rome asserted their independent civic identity and wealth shortly before the Social War. Likewise at Rome, monumentalization did not only concern single temples, but connected independent but adjacent temples by pavements or porticoes, as in the case of the Largo Argentina, where the tufa pavement from around 100 BCE might be the work of Q. Lutatius Catulus (MAR 54). By the first century BCE whole building complexes in the center of the city and adjacent spaces like the Campus Martius, including porticoes, theatres, and basilicas, were realized by leading figures like Pompey or Caesar, announcing the imperial fora of the century to come. Super-rich individuals of the late Republican period like Lucullus even rivalled the temple complexes of Latin cities in their private villas (Rüpke 2002) or established original temples for major gods like Hercules (Hesberg 2005).

Thus, private foundations on private grounds accrued. Whereas public temples were built on public or publicly acquired grounds and formally dedicated to the gods and thus made *sacer*, “holy” (*consecratio*), private temple foundations did not have the same legal status. Legally, they were *sacraria* only, places of individual and family worship that were not binding for the buyer (*emptor*) of the house or garden, but should and could be easily transferred (Ulp. Dig. 1.8.9.2 with Ando 2008, 112–13.). Nevertheless, in some cases such sanctuaries might last for generations (although we should not be overconfident as to the continuity of private cults and colleges). Archaeologically, the identification of such places within a house, shop, or villa is extremely difficult and always a matter of debate. The beginning of the so-called Syrian sanctuary on the slopes of the Janiculum (today Via Dandolo) is a case in point (briefly MAR 156); it might well reach back into the Augustan period, even if the spectacular arrangements date from the later second century only. The phases of the sanctuary of the god Mithras below San Clemente, featuring a succession of private rooms and rooms coordinated with the typically Mithraean oblong meeting room, offer an example for the second to fourth centuries (see, in general, Gordon 2007).

In many quarters, open-air shrines, *sacella* and *luci*, could be found. These were small precincts with an altar and planted groves, usually also with an altar for sacrifice; in the fifth century Servius, commenting on Vergil's Aeneid defines *lucus* as *arborum multitudo cum religione*, “a large number of trees that have been consecrated” (1.310). If we can believe Juvenal, ordinary people were still making use of this religious infrastructure in the early second century CE (10.354–6, 13.232–5). Occasionally such a grove could be a major religious place, for example the *lucus Libitinae*, the headquarters of the

funeral undertakers of Rome (Plut. *Quaest. Rom* 23.267b), beside a large piece of land used for cremations and inhumations, and, near it, the grove of Juno Lucina, who was a goddess of birth, and births were somehow registered there, accompanied by a small donation (Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 4.15.5; Plin. *HN* 16.235; Rüpke 2007).

The resulting sum of such decisions and developments is far from any “readable” map or conceptually unified “sacred landscape.” Theory could hardly follow practice. Vitruvius, the theoretician of architecture, referred to an Etruscan rule to place the veneration of the god of Fire, Vulcan, and of the god of war, Mars, outside of the city. To keep the destructive power of fire away from the city seems sensible, but the placing of the ancient sanctuary of the god on the margins of the Forum Romanum (Volcanal) as well as the placing of the temples for Mars in the monumental area of the Campus Martius, legally outside the city (*urbs*), demonstrates that religious, not pragmatic reasons were decisive. Vitruvius also says that shrines of Isis and Serapis ought to be placed in harbor areas, with their high proportion of immigrants and foreigners (*De Arch.* 1.7.1). But again, that sociologically rather than theologically inspired rule is contradicted by the long fight about a possible temple of Isis on the Capitoline hill and the Iseum Metellinum on the southern slopes of the Oppian hill (MAR 150). Thus, any conceptual interpretation of the sacral topography of ancient Rome must be left to (irrecoverable) individual “mental maps,” routines of religious practices by women or men starting from their own homes, which might or might not offer domestic shrines. In all cases, the location of family tombs on the outskirts of the city will have been an important element of such “maps.”

The Capitoline hill, which even today hides an enormous architectural complexity behind and below the piazza designed by Michelangelo, offers an excellent illustration for my skepticism to talk about any organized “infrastructure,” as well as providing a good example of an area densely populated by gods. By Augustan times the Area Capitolina did not only contain the Capitoline temple with its separated *cellae* for three deities. Famous, too, were the temples of Fides, of Ops, of Iuppiter Tonans, and the shrine of Fortuna Primigenia. A temple of Iuppiter Feretrius was to be found there, as well as a temple of Venus Victrix, not to mention altars and statues (MAR 53–4.). On the other peak of the hill, today crowned by Santa Maria in Aracoeli, the temples of Iuno Moneta (with the minting of money being done below), of Concordia (different from the one near the Forum), of Dea Caelestis (“evocated” from Carthage), and perhaps even of Isis must have been seen in the same period; the place for augural observations called *auguraculum* (see Festus p. 466.36–468.3 L.) was situated above them (MAR 57–8, 96–7).

Associations

If a city and a city's religion is taken not only as an architectural, but also as a social fabric, for Rome, as for many Graeco-Roman cities, associations (*collegia*) must be allotted an important place; significant portions of the free population, maybe up to a quarter, would have been involved (for the following see Rüpke 2007, 205–14). *Collegia* were private organizations that could acquire legal personality (and so, at any rate from the reign of Marcus Aurelius, own property) by being “registered.” The gamut of different types is very wide: the slaves owned by a large household (*familia*) might unite to form a *collegium*; independent craftsmen formed large professional organizations partly for convivial purposes but also to protect their rights and status, as the mediaeval guilds did. There were also *collegia* explicitly founded as religious associations, though it is impossible for us to distinguish in these cases between convivial aims and needs and narrowly religious ones. A membership of between fifteen and one or two hundred members was common and it is thus rare that space to accommodate all members to dine at once would be available. With few exceptions, only men are found as members of professional *collegia* (such women as do appear are usually given the honorific title of *mater*, mother), but women did play a role in many religious associations, for example in the cult of Isis. From the epigraphic record, it seems clear that most members of professional associations in Rome or Ostia, say, were relatively well off, owners of merchant businesses and workshops, that is, people in a position to finance the social activities of the association through their membership fees, maintain the often elaborate club buildings (*scholae*), and make expensive gifts to adorn it so as to ensure they would be given a funeral (e.g. *CIL* 14.2112 = Dessau, *ILS* 7212; *AE* 1940, 62).

Occasionally, an extended family could organize itself in the form of a *collegium* dedicated to the cult of a god. By the middle of the second century nearly four hundred members of a Dionysian club set up an inscription to honor the daughter of the founder, Pompeia Agrippinilla. This inscription from Torrenova near Rome takes the form of a membership list supplying a wealth of different functions for about fifty members. Obviously, at least an equivalent complexity of rituals and ritual space has to be imagined.

The *vici* were a special type of association-like organizations, and were even more widespread than *collegia*. By the end of the first century BCE, the local cult of the *Lares compitales*, which was celebrated at small shrines at crossroads (*compita*) all over Rome (Lott 2004), had been organized in all 265 *vici* of the city. Four *magistri*, predominantly of freedman status, were elected annually by the residents and were assisted by four *ministri*, servants, usually slaves. Symbolically they were given very high status by being granted lictors and being allowed to wear the *toga praetexta* of magistrates and priests when on duty. Their importance gave a decisive boost to the practice of setting up ornate marble altars, often with a relief of them sacrificing. Thus, every year a

(not always changing) multitude of about two thousand priests of the crossroads should have started their duty on 1 August (the month of Augustus, the emperor who was regarded as the founding figure). Here at least, an organized religious “infrastructure,” centralized in fourteen “regions” is visible. Archaeologically, several of the aforementioned altars have been found in situ; the excavations of the Emporium on the banks of the Tiber and the Via Marmorata in particular give an idea of their architectural integration into the local community (Rüpke 1998).

Having stressed the social importance of associations so far, a reservation has to be added. Probably all these associations met on an infrequent basis. Against the backdrop of our own firmly established weekly (or, if we think of any regularity, monthly) rhythms of religious and many other groups’ meetings, that might seem awkward. But epigraphy offers clear evidence. From the mid-second century CE, the rules of the *collegium* of Aesculapius and Hygieia in Rome gave a schedule of dates that could give an indication of the usual practice:

On 4th January: New Year gifts are to be distributed as on 19th September.

On 22nd February, the day of the *Caristia* (family feast): a distribution of bread and wine to be made at the *schola* near the temple of Mars, in the same amount as on 4th November.

On 14th March, at the same place, a dinner is to be held, which Ofilius Hermes, the president, has promised to provide each year for everyone present; alternatively a money distribution in the usual amount.

On 22nd March, Violets’ day: in the *schola*, gifts of money, bread and wine to those present, in the amount stated above.

On 11th May, Roses’ day: in the *schola*, gifts of money, bread and wine to those present, in the amount stated above, on the condition, agreed at the full assembly, that the monetary gifts, bread and wine allocated to those who do not attend shall be put up for sale and given to those who do attend, except in the cases of those who happen to be abroad or who are indisposed through illness (from *CIL* 6.10234 = Dessau, *ILS* 7213 = *AE* 1937, 161, trsl. Richard Gordon in Rüpke 2007, 209).

The whole association had been financed and (re)organized by a certain Salvia Marcellina, wife of a freedman named Capito in commemoration of him and his superior, Flavius Apollonius, a *procurator Augusti* in charge of the imperial picture galleries. The association had received a roofed structure as a meeting place, together with funds to hold banquets. In order to permit the bequest to meet the costs, the donator had limited the maximum number of members to sixty. The most important dates were related to the cult of deified emperors, further meetings are scheduled for days commonly used for the commemoration of the dead. Such a practice is surely a consequence of the

Roman laws controlling associations, which limited official meetings to once a month, and allowed monthly contributions only up to a certain sum. Tertullian, at the turn of the third century CE, claimed that Christian associations – in fact churches, with their Sunday services and alms-giving – conformed to these rules (*Apol.* 39.5). Such a claim might be a lie of an “apologetic,” but given the spaces available for meetings and the necessity to earn one’s livelihood by daily work, for many we cannot be sure that regular meetings according to the planetary week, that is to say, permanently at odds with the Roman “nundinal” week of eight days (or Greek decade practices), could have been efficiently institutionalized. We know that in Rome, celebrations of birthdays and other commemorative days tended to be grouped together at the monthly Kalends and Ides (Rüpke 2007, 193).

We have no information about the dates of such regular monthly meetings of any religious group, insofar as there were any in addition to the optional festivities (birthdays and so on) over the course of the year. We may however take it that they fell on one of the named days each month, the Kalends, Nones or Ides.

As mentioned at the outset, the idea that such associations could exercise influence over the members’ lifestyle, *disciplina*, developed only slowly. In Hellenistic and earlier times such a connection was known and accepted for groups that qualified as philosophical “schools.” Such rules could include regular attendance, and abstaining from meat and sex (Sen. *Ep.* 108.17–22; Diog. Laert. 8.19). We must assume that the process of establishing, but not successfully implementing, such rules for the socially mixed groups of Jews (and Judaeo-Christians) produced a permanent discrepancy of norms and actual behavior, as can be seen by the many complaints of the theoreticians (see, for example, those from the mid-first century CE: Paul, *1Cor.* 7.32–5; *Rom.* 16.17–20; Philo, *On Drunkenness*, 20–26; *Leg.* 3.155–9; Harland 2003: 206–10; Dunn 2007).

From the perspective of this chapter, there is an important consequence for the urban fabric. As an immigrant to Rome – and we must assume that immigration was a major source of growth, if not stability, of the urban population (see Lo Cascio, Chapter 6 in this volume) – you could not simply join an association, meet them at their meetings, or wait for them in their meeting places. The sociological structure of associations could not be identified as an “infrastructure” for practical purposes. Associations like the one of Aesculapius and Hygieia allowed new members to join, but they had to be recommended by existing members and might have to contribute to the capital stock from which their future dining and maybe funeral costs would be paid. You had to establish yourself first, before you could enter the existing social fabric as a member of a profession, family, perhaps even an ethnic group. The envoys of Paul, as Lucius, the high-ranking Isis venerator in Apuleius’s *Metamorphoses*, had to carry letters of recommendation.

Priestly Colleges

The example of the “masters of the quarters” (*magistri vici*) has already opened a further perspective. Structurally, as terminologically, there were hardly any differences between normal voluntary associations (*collegia*) and collegial priesthoods (*collegia sacerdotum*). “Private” associations often built and supported public temples, and played a part in public rituals (e.g. *SHA Gall.* 8.6; *Aurel.* 34.4). A *collegium* such as the *Dendrophori* seems to have played a role as religious specialists, not only on March 22 at the spring festival of the Mater Magna, but also to have acted as a fire-brigade. Yet the similarities end when we consider the financial possibilities. Meetings of the prestigious priestly colleges could be held in the spacious villas of the senatorial class, on occasions meals were a matter of competition and were not limited by the interests provided by a foundation on behalf of a college of ordinary people or even slaves. For the priesthoods, the cost of the cult proper would be met by public funding as described above. Finally, the size of priesthoods was normally more restricted. This varied from type to type, but twelve (plus a few super honorary seats) was a common size and larger colleges would not exceed fifteen to twenty. The composite larger pontifical college, including pontiffs, minor pontiffs, *flamines*, and Vestal virgins, would have comprised more than thirty people. However, in these echelons of society, many would be absent on imperial service in administrative or military positions for much of the time.

These priesthoods had an important role in the functioning of public cult as a whole, even if many public rituals would be performed by magistrates rather than priests. Religious rituals and considerations permeated political action, typically the membership in a “public” priesthood accompanied a career of political offices. On the other hand, the new festivals of the imperial period (for instance, the victory games for Augustus) frequently involved many a priesthood without any known functional necessity. Thus, they were important elements of the fabric of actions that could be called “public religion.” At the same time, comparable to the other associations, one should be cautious about speaking of priests as “religious infrastructure,” as service personnel easily available for everybody. First, it would have been difficult to find them. Of course, everybody would have known that the Vestal virgins lived in a building adjacent to the *aedes Vestae*, namely the *atrium Vestae*, including the *domus publica* of the *rex sacrorum* given to them by Augustus in 12 BCE (*MAR* 60), when the residence of the supreme pontiff was transferred to the Palatine (*Cass. Dio* 54.27.3; *MAR* 115). Whereas the Vestals were hardly addressed by the general public (unless you decided to deposit

your will with them as a political insurance), the *pontifex maximus*, T. Coruncanus, even set up a sign “open for consultation” (*consulere licet*) during the first half of the third century BCE, indicating the juristic services offered by the pontiffs. They did not enjoy a monopoly of competence as advocates, but they could answer questions regarding the status of burial places and the prospective permanency of tombs. Here, a certain public demand was to be expected, even if we have no indication of how often the threatening of pontifical sanctions on tombstones far away from Rome did lead to an action brought before the Roman college. If we can speak of any priesthood being part of a permanent religious infrastructure, the pontiffs must have been a case in point.

The same might be said about the priesthood that contained the specialists for divination, the augurs, whose service was frequently demanded by magistrates for support before major political or military procedures. For others, they were much more difficult to contact; we do not know about any permanent seat of the augurs. The same holds true for many other public priesthoods. Even the splendid structure of the grove of Dea Dia used for the cult of the Arval brethren, which, by the third century CE, included a bath (Broise and Scheid 1987, Scheid 1990), did not accommodate a permanent office – and in fact there would have been no need for this. Those professional services, however, that were frequently on general – I now avoid the term “public” – demand, could be found. Haruspices, that is Etruscan diviners whose top ranked members were given a permanent official status in the early empire, were known to be found around the Circus Maximus, as were astrologers (Cic. *Div.* 2.9).

A brief review of the most important priesthoods is in order. By the Augustan period, the most important priesthoods at Rome include the following (pace Rüpke 2008):

The Collegium Pontificale

- The position of *rex* and *regina sacrorum*, “king” and “queen of sacrifices,” were held, as most of Roman priesthoods (unless otherwise indicated), for life. In the Republican period it was restricted to patricians. The position was important for some of the routine rituals connected to the calendar but seems to have declined during the imperial period.
- The *pontifex maximus* functioned as the permanent “chairman” of the pontifical college, which comprised sixteen members from Caesar onwards. During the imperial period the college was further enlarged by *supernumerarii* from the imperial family; the emperor took on the role of *pontifex maximus*. As in other colleges, the basis for

membership was a process of cooptation comprising nomination by members of the college, popular election, and actual cooptation within the college itself. Originally mere aids to the *pontifices*, at the turn of the third and second centuries BCE the *scribae pontificum* developed into a group of priests called *pontifices minores* that would, in the imperial period, be filled from the ranks of the equestrians.

- Under the particular supervision of the *pontifex maximus*, six Vestal Virgins served in the *aedes Vestae* complex in the Forum, each for a minimum period of thirty years. The longest-serving Vestal, *virgo Vestalis maxima*, had particular authority as the Vestals could be “seized” at the age of six years. By the expression *flamen*, the Latin language distinguishes individual priests responsible for the cult of a particular god (but not thereby monopolizing that cult).
- As the individual priests of Jupiter, Mars, and Quirinus respectively, the *flamen Dialis*, *flamen Martialis*, and *flamen Quirinalis* enjoyed the highest prestige within the pontifical college (*flamines maiores*). The positions were filled by patricians and were subject to stringent restrictions. Like all of the aforementioned priests, the *flamines minores* belonged to the pontifical college, twelve priests of various gods, of whom we have no complete list.

The Other Major Colleges

As regards prestige, the augurs formed the second most significant college after the pontiffs. Like them, under the *lex Ogulnia* of 300 BCE at least half the positions had to be filled by plebeians. The duties of the *augur maximus* as senior member are unknown; the function did not undergo the institutionalization that befell the supreme pontificate.

- *Quindecimviri sacris faciundis* (thus called from Sullan times onwards) were a 15-man committee charged with consulting the Sibylline Books (*libri Sibyllini*) but had all the features of a regular priesthood by the late Republic; the college was headed by several magistrates.
- The *septemviri epulones* were founded in 196 BCE, probably to differentiate a duty of the pontiffs to arrange the meals in honor of Jupiter or of the Capitoline Triad during the *ludi Romani* and *ludi plebei*, and perhaps rose from seven to ten after Caesar’s reform of the colleges.
- They shared in prestige with the Arval Brethren (*Fratres Arvales*), only dimly attested for the Republic, but reorganized by Augustus around 29 BCE. Their monumental records, inscribed on stone at the sanctuary of

Dea Dia a few kilometers outside the city, afford an exceptional insight into the everyday business of this priesthood, which combined archaic features with veneration of the ruling family and intercession on its behalf.

- Two groups of Salian priests, *Salii Palatini* and *Collini*, each of twelve members, might have been a result of an Augustan reform, too. They comprised very young members (in the imperial period often about twenty years old) whose parents must still be living. They ceased membership upon appointment to the consulate or to particular priesthoods. From Augustus onwards, three other Republican priesthoods gained in prestige.
- The *fetiales* were originally involved in negotiating reparations and declaring war; now they were a sort of entry-level post, filled by plebeians.
- *Sodales Titii* could have served the same career function, but we have not the slightest idea of their ritual tasks.
- Finally, the *Luperci* (probably) were reduced to one college by Augustus; they continued to be involved in the ritual of the Lupercalia in February. In the course of the Principate they progressively gained in prestige.

Imperial Innovations

Since the deification of Caesar and Augustus, new types of priesthoods appeared. A *flamen* (or female *flaminica*) of a deified emperor (or empress) served the cult of such a new deity and were integrated into the larger pontifical college. At the death of Augustus in 14 CE, the *sodales Augustales* were founded, construed on the lines of a dynastic cult, as demonstrated by their cult site and meeting center at Bovillae. They continued to operate under the probably more precise title of *sodales Augustales Claudiales* and only saw the creation of a new college with the establishment of the Flavian dynasty (*sodales Flaviales Titiales*, later furthermore *sodales Hadrianales* and *sodales Antoniniani*).

Many other cults had, occasionally large, bodies of priesthoods. For the Christians, mention must be made of a complex clergy that evolved during the second century. From the end of this century onwards, the major groups of Christians were headed by an *episcopus* (bishop) each, being supported – in the case of the majority church – by seven *diaconi* and *presbyteroi* (and an occasional *presbyter*). Mithraic “Lions” and “Fathers” were the most important functionaries of Mithraic groups and locales, Jewish Archonts

headed synagogues. Frequently, cultic and administrative offices ran parallel.

Conclusion

Religion in its various forms took part in shaping the city's fabric on a macro-level as well as on the micro-topographies of living quarters, crossroads, and houses. However, the visibility of religion was as much dominated by religious action as by religious infrastructure. Temples attracted observers by sacrifices. Processions filled roads. Games filled circuses and (amphi)theaters. From early Rome onwards, the monumentalization of religious places accompanied the growth of the city. The process was, however, slow. It took ages before the temporary wooden structures of theatres were replaced by stone theatres, of the type already known outside of Rome before the first century BCE. Imperial largesse added further circuses, theatres, and the Flavian amphitheatre. And yet, more important developments were hardly visible. Small groups gathered in inconspicuous places, such as Mithraic assembly rooms or even temporary and improvised as in the case of some Christian groups before the fourth century CE (see John Curran, [Chapter 27](#) in this volume).

Guide to Further Reading

For an introduction to Roman religion, Rüpke (2007) attempts to combine a substantial overview with a discussion of methodological problems; for more detailed information, the handbook of Wissowa (1912) remains indispensable; a narrative from the late Bronze age to the early Iron age is given by Rüpke (2018). An excellent and well commented collection of sources is offered by Beard *et al.* (1998, vol. 2). Information on details (including recent literature) is given by the many articles relating to religion by Brill's *New Pauly*. For Roman temples, Ziolkowski (1992) discusses the literary and archaeological evidence for mid-Republican temples, Stamper 2005 is more general in the discussion of the period following. Religious associations have been one of the focuses of recent research; useful collections of contributions have been collected by Kloppenborg and Wilson (1996); Egelhaaf-Gaiser and Schäfer (2002); Harland (2003), and Rüpke (2007). Roman priesthoods are institutionally and prosopographically analyzed in Rüpke (2008), and contextualized in Richardson and Santangelo (2011).

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CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

Entertainment¹

David Potter

In the early years of the sixth century CE, Flavius Maximus Aurelius Cassiodorus was serving as quaestor of the sacred palace to Theoderic, the Ostrogothic king of Italy, resident in Ravenna. One of Cassiodorus's jobs was to communicate Theoderic's views on law, often in the form of letters to individuals. On a number of occasions between 509 and 511 CE these letters were addressed to Flavius Probus Anicius Faustus, his immediate predecessor as quaestor, who was then holding the important position of praetorian prefect, or head of the civil administration in Italy. Both men were members of established senatorial families (exceptionally well-established in Faustus's case) at Rome, and quite possibly related to each other. What they knew about Rome's history and institutions can therefore be taken as representative of what well-educated people at the end of the Roman empire knew about the city's earlier history. That is why the letter Cassiodorus wrote to Faustus about chariot racing is so interesting.

The proximate cause of this correspondence was Faustus's desire to stabilize the salary of an eastern charioteer named Thomas who had evidently become a huge fan-favorite, single-handedly reviving the fortunes of one of the four factions (teams) that had not been doing especially well of late. Cassiodorus responded that Thomas could have his compensation guaranteed and then treated Faustus to a history of the sport, which, he said was once sacred, but now profaned by quarrelsome posterity and a "gushing spring" of strife. It was, though, of great antiquity, getting its start in the deep mythological past from king Oenomaus of Elis, a place located, incorrectly, by Cassiodorus in Asia (western Turkey). Romulus had subsequently put on a rustic form of it, when stealing the Sabine women. It was Augustus, Rome's first emperor, who had improved everything by building the Circus Maximus in the valley of Murcia between the Palatine and Aventine hills. It was he who laid out the twelve starting gates, commemorating the twelve zones of the Zodiac, and established the four factions in the image of the seasons: Green for the fertility of the spring, Blue for the clouds of winter, Red for the fiery summer, and White for the frosts of autumn. The infamous Nero, emperor 54–68, was responsible for the use of the *mappa*, a white cloth to signal the start. When the crowd was demanding that the race start while he was dining in the palace, he had thrown his napkin out the window as a signal that the contest could begin. The races themselves were called *circenses*, so Cassiodorus says (*Var.* 3.51), because they were once run in meadows amongst swords and stream

(*ensis*, pl. *enses* means sword, *circum* means is the prefix indicating “around”).

With the exception of his statement about the location of the Circus Maximus and some subsidiary observations on the race track—that the chariots dash from the starting gates to a white line in set lanes then circle the track seven times—pretty much everything Cassiodorus has to say is wrong (including his bogus etymology for circensian games: *-ensis* is simply an adjectival ending denoting place, the games are *circenses* because they take place in a circus). No better is the history of beast hunts, *venationes*, which he described a number of years later for the consul Decius Marius Basilus. Nor is the account of theatrical professions that he wrote to Symmachus, another important member of the senate, at about the same time he wrote about chariot racing. Beast hunts, then held in the Colosseum, recently repaired by Maximus Basilus himself (*Epigraphia anfiteatrale* vol. 6 n. 5), were no longer second-best to gladiatorial bouts, which had ended at some point between the 430s and Cassiodorus’s lifetime. Cassiodorus, who appears to know nothing about gladiators, does not recognize the fact that the early history of beast hunts was linked to Rome’s relationship to Africa. He thought the hunts had been invented in Classical Greece, where he believed that the Athenians had introduced them into civic cult honoring Scythian Diana. Their arrival at Rome was the result of Titus’s (r. 79–81) completion of the Colosseum (*Var.* 5.42). Both the Greek connection and the link with Titus are wrong. Cassiodorus’s history of theater, offered in the context of a grant from Theodoric to repair Rome’s Theater of Pompey, is no better. Cassiodorus says Athenian farmers invented the theatrical arts, with tragedy deriving its name from the fact that successful actors received goats. Comedy derived its name from villages (*komai*) while pantomime takes its name from the many characters the dancer must imitate (this may be the only correct thing Cassiodorus has to say; *Var.* 4.5).

It is interesting that, despite the poverty of his information, Cassiodorus links the history of each entertainment to a building. We too must consider the history of buildings at Rome, for our other guides to the history of entertainment are quite poor. Even the greatest historian of Rome, Cornelius Tacitus, writing in the early second century CE, believed odd things. He believed, for instance, that chariot racing was imported from Thurii, that actors came to Rome from Etruria, that in the “good old days” people watched games while standing, and that the once modest practice of the theatrical arts had degenerated after the triumph of Mummius in 145 BCE. He also believed that the Circus Maximus was identifiable by that title in the earliest years of the Republic. What Tacitus says about chariot racing, and the history of the theater is definitely wrong, and the emphasis on Mummius, a historiographic trope, is overstated (*Tac. Ann.* 14.20–21). The one thing he does not get wrong is the early date for the Circus Maximus, but he only gets this right

because he is looking at the history of a temple associated with the track rather than at the history of racing per se. The correct tradition is connected with the Temple to Liber, Libera, and Ceres “next to” the Circus Maximus, which was rededicated in 17 CE; the original temple appears to have been built in the fifth century BCE (Tac. *Ann.* 2.49). Rome’s other great historian, Livy, is no better (Livy 7.2.4–12). His own history of the development of the theatrical arts at Rome is fantastic and, like Tacitus, his good information about entertainment comes when it is coincidental to the history of something else. The poor work on these topics at Rome does, though, have parallels elsewhere. The Greek travel writer, Pausanias, offers a history of the Olympics marred by many errors in the sections where he is dealing with earlier written accounts and is extremely good when he is talking about things he could actually see (Paus. 5.7.6–5.9.6). In light of the peculiarities of such work, it is unlikely that the absence of any ancient effort to offer a history of gladiatorial combat is a terrible tragedy.

The fact that otherwise learned Romans – and writers attempting similar histories elsewhere – did not have a clear view of the development of public spectacle in their city is not just a sign of the poverty of decent ancient scholarship, but also of the very great antiquity of the institutions. There was not yet a Roman historiographic tradition when theatrical and equestrian events came to Rome; the arrival of *venationes* in the context of private *munera* (gifts) was not a matter for public record, and the history of gladiatorial combat is more complicated than the bare surviving record will suggest. The one thing that we can be sure of is that the different occasions for the various events – *munera* for beast hunts and gladiatorial games, *ludi*, or public shows, for chariot racing and theatrical events – are significant. This is because they tell us something about the point at which the different entertainment types were introduced. Events connected with *ludi* are older than events connected with *munera* (Weidemann 1992, 1–8). This is something that seems not to have occurred to Cassiodorus, and in what follows we will be looking for ways to use what information we have to establish something of an actual history of what would become a massive entertainment industry and a major feature of the experience of life at Rome.

Entertainments in the Early and Middle Republic

Competitive chariot racing is a feature of aristocratic societies in Greece and Italy. It is not attested in the chariot-using societies of the Near East, where the deployment of chariots as royal vehicles and war engines may have made their use as toys for aristocratic self-aggrandizement ideologically impractical. The role of chariot racing as a factor in asserting aristocratic status in the Greco-Roman world may also be connected to their limited value as weapons

of war in areas that were geographically incapable of supporting the large forces of chariotry needed for tactically effective operation. In the Homeric poems, chariots are useful only for transporting aristocrats into and out of combat when they are not being raced. There is some, albeit limited, evidence from the late Mycenaean period for chariot racing at funeral games, just as they appear in the twenty-third book of the *Iliad*, but that too is likely a result of their nebulous value as weapons. In *Iliad* 23, it appears that the track for a chariot race would be determined on the day of the event and that there was no perceived need for physical structures necessary in later times, chiefly starting gates, and a track requiring multiple laps (Hom. *Il.* 23. 262–615). Since earliest chariot racing was more about status than entertainment, what mattered most was who came in first rather than that masses of people could watch an event. In Greece, by the early fifth century, this had changed radically as, for instance, the hippodrome at Olympia had provision for regular starting gates and for multiple laps, making it possible for fans to get a good view of the entire race while enhancing the possibility that chariots would crash into each other. The developments of Greek chariot racing are relevant to the situation in Rome for two reasons, one is the very real probability that Italian chariot racing developed under the influence of Greek custom, as did other forms of athleticism (e.g. boxing, wrestling, and pentathlon); the other is that the multiple-lap system of racing is essential to the style of chariot racing in the Circus Maximus. By the time the track was laid out in the Circus Maximus, chariot racing had been institutionalized as a spectator sport (Potter 2011, 24–33, 68–73).

The Temple of Liber, Libera, and Ceres makes it probable that the area in the valley of Murcia, between the Palatine and the Aventine, was already used for chariot racing in the early fifth century. What is less clear is whether the track was laid out there because of preexisting shrines to Murcia, a goddess of luck, and Consus (identifiable with the Greek Poseidon) as a god of horses, or if the shrines were erected there because of the chariot racing (Humphrey 1986, 60–61, 95–7, 258–9). A law included in Rome's mid-fifth-century law code tells us something about who was actually involved. The information comes from a section dealing with burial, in which it appears whoever wins a crown, either on his own or through the efforts of his dependents, may be buried with it. These crowns, which are distinguished from crowns awarded for military valor, are most likely for victories in games, and the fact that someone could win such a crown through the efforts of his dependents suggests that the games in question involved chariots. The award of a crown of victory is plainly imported from a Greek context and so would be the notion that one could win such a crown through the efforts of a servant (equestrian events being the only ones in which the principal could be accorded a prize without having to participate in person) (Twelve Tables fr. X, 7 [Crawford]; Rawson 1981, 1–4). Just as Greek sport appears to have evolved in an atmosphere of intense elite competition, so, too, it appears – on the basis of some admittedly

rather scanty evidence – that chariot racing had a similar ambience in its earliest phase, quite possibly because it was not necessary for the actual owner to ride in the chariot himself. In other circumstances, Roman aristocrats avoided direct participation in spectacle, or regarded such participation as scandalous in the extreme (an attitude which may in fact have encouraged some members of the elite to join in all manner of spectacles with considerable vigor).

If chariot racing did begin as an entertaining medium for aristocratic competition, is not clear when exactly it was transformed into the state-supported public service it became, but it is possible that the transformation was well underway during the fourth century. There may have been chariot races in the Circus when a Tiber flood impeded the *ludi* in 363 (Livy 7.3.1–2); we may be reasonably certain that the state had taken a more direct role in the administration of the games by 330 when permanent *carceres*, or starting gates, were constructed for the first time (Livy 8.19.2). Since later reconstructions of the starting gates are described as being just that, we may reasonably conclude that the canonical twelve gates were built at this time and that the construction of gates in a multiple of four indicate that the four factions that were to administer the games in later years had already come into existence. The nature of their relationship to the state in the late third century BCE is clarified by an incident in 214 BCE when the censors charged with letting contracts for public services announced that they could not issue a contract for the supply of chariot horses (Livy 24.18.1). The group that had supplied them, a corporation of *publicani*, announced that it would continue to supply the horses without pay for the duration of the war that was then raging with Carthage. That such a contract existed in the first place suggests that the state was in the business of providing free horses to the people who actually ran the races, or the factions, first mentioned, albeit indirectly, by the poet Ennius, in the early second century (Enn. *Ann.* Fr. xlvii, 79–83 Skutsch; Rawson 1981, 5–6). In 174 the state further upgraded the facilities, constructing the central barrier, adding lap counters and, it seems, some sort of lane markers (Livy 41.27.6; Humphrey 1986, 60–72).

The construction of permanent structures in the Circus Maximus stands in stark contrast to the state's handling of two other forms of entertainment that had become important by the middle of the second century: stage productions and combats, either between humans or involving animals.

Theatrical performance plainly had a long history at Rome well before the lifetime of the first playwrights whose work has been preserved either through complete scripts or quotations in later authors. The third-century BCE writers who are known to us – Naevius, Livius Andronicus, and Plautus – are known because later Romans felt they had a particular place in the development of a Latin literature based on Greek literary models. There were earlier forms of drama at Rome, and quite possibly even earlier adaptations of Greek forms

into Latin than were remembered in the later tradition. In the parallel case of oratory, the earliest major works that survived into the first century BCE, when Cicero mentions them, are speeches delivered by Appius Claudius Caecus in the early third century (Cic. *Brut.* 55). Before that the earliest work of Latin prose, aside from laws, that we know of was a book on the calendar produced by an aedile named Flavius at the end of the fourth century. We cannot assume, however on the basis of these records that the Romans did not deliver speeches prior to 300, or write things down (the fifth-century law code is unlikely to have existed in a vacuum) (Livy 9.46 with Oakley 1997–2005 vol. 4, 600–645). The erratic preservation of the earliest Latin literature – we only know about the smattering of early third-century BCE rhetorical texts that we do because Cicero happened to mention them – means that we cannot assume that the absence of surviving dramas means that there were no dramas. Even the poor traditions we have about the history of the subject are based on the assumption that there was something before what we now have.

In the case of drama, some Romans of the first two centuries BCE believed that the art form developed from rustic forms of entertainment. This version of the story sees the development of drama as being initially indigenous, and holds that when the verses people were singing became too obscene, Greek arts were introduced to move performances in a more salubrious direction (Gell. *NA* 17.21.42–4 quoting Varro; Hor. *Epist.* 2.1. 139–60). In Livy's version of this story, Etruscans who danced in decorous ways to the sound of a flute were brought in as part of the effort to ward off the plague in 364 BCE. Romans were thrilled and “the youth” began to imitate the Etruscan players with joking verses. This somewhat primitive form of entertainment held sway until the middle of the third century when Livius Andronicus introduced more sophisticated performances and literary forms based on Greek models (Livy 7.2 and Oakley 1997–2005 vol. 2, 40–71).

The stories that have come down to us about Roman drama read a great deal like Greek versions of the history of Greek drama, which was also transformed from a rustic or rough mode of entertainment to something more sophisticated through the intervention of talented individuals (the actor Thespis in the case of Greek drama). The story of the origin of Greek drama may be oversimplified; and the problem with believing the Roman story at all is that it presumes Rome to have been a rather primitive place in the late fourth century, which it was not. Late fourth-century Rome, rapidly becoming the great power on the Italian peninsula, had extensive contacts with Campania and the broader world of Greek culture. Campania itself had extensive contacts with Sicily, where its men went in large numbers to serve as mercenaries, and, to Rome's north, the Etruscans were well enough known in the Aegean for the word Tyrrhenian (Greek for Etruscan) to be a synonym for “pirate.” There is a powerful, though unprovable, argument that the well-developed sense of Roman history appearing in plays on historical themes in

the later third century had already taken shape through earlier performances at the *ludi Romani* (Wiseman 1998, 1–16 contra Flower 1995). The fact that it cannot be proven that dramas were presented at fourth-century *ludi* is not fatal to this argument since it is just as true that it cannot be proven that drama was not presented at the *ludi*. The connection between dramatic performances and *ludi* is so well established by the end of the third century that no one knew when it had begun. That ignorance is actually a positive argument for the initiation of dramatic performances well before the beginning of written history at Rome. A second argument for the early origin of dramatic performance is that the poets were organized, by the end of the third century, into an artistic association or *collegium*, whose members were free to negotiate with the aristocratic sponsors of *ludi* (Horsfall 2010). This is more like chariot racing and unlike gladiatorial combat, which tended to be subordinate to the interests of individual aristocratic entrepreneurs, including both Cicero and Julius Caesar during the fifties BCE (Cic. *Att.* 4.4a.2, 4.8.2; Suet. *Iul.* 26, 31; Caes. *BCiv.* 1.14).

It is significant that drama and circus chariot racing are components of *ludi*, which were state-funded festivals. Later entertainments, chiefly gladiatorial combat and beast hunts were features of *munera*, or “gifts” presented by aristocrats on their own behalf to the people. Gladiatorial combat began at Rome in the middle of the third century. There is no reason to doubt that games were held when Livy said they were held in 264 BCE, even if there is no compelling reason to believe that these were the first ever held at Rome. The reason is that we cannot be fully sure the stress in the statement “Decimus Iunius Brutus gave a gladiatorial *munus* in honor of his deceased father for the first time” is on the holding of a gladiatorial exhibition as a “gift” to the people or the holding of such an event in a funerary context at Rome (Livy *Per.* 16). Our other statement about the arrival of the games at Rome is even more problematic. This is the assertion that they came to Rome from Etruria, stated in antiquity only by Nicolaus of Damascus, the Jewish historian of Augustus’s time (*FGrH* 90 Fr.78 with Potter 2011, 186–90). Beast hunts appear to have been inspired by the ability to import exotic animals from Africa in the wake of the Second Punic War when the North African kingdom of Numidia, a supplier of such beasts, came firmly into the Roman orbit (Ville 1981, 53–6).

The most important thing that dramatic performance, gladiatorial combat, and beast hunts had in common was that they did not have permanent homes at Rome until the late Republican and Augustan ages. This may be a result of the fact that all three were seen as somehow being foreign (certainly this was a factor in later expressions of hostility to the prospect that a permanent theater might be built) or it may simply be that they took up less space than chariot racing, meaning that there was initially no need to set aside a specific area for them when they first came on to the Roman scene (ideology was later a

definite factor in their not obtaining a permanent home). By the end of the second century it appears, however, that temporary theaters were often constructed for drama in the Campus Martius, while proto-amphitheaters for gladiatorial combat were constructed in the Forum (Potter 2011, 197–8, contra Welch 2007).

Entertainments in the Late Republic and Early Empire

The four most important developments in the regime of Roman entertainment from the later second century BCE through the first centuries CE were their increasing cost, the ever more intimate connection with partisan politics, the linkage of attitudes about conceptions of status to display at public performances, and development of permanent venues within which they could be held.

In Rome today some of the most impressive surviving monuments are those connected with public spectacle. The Colosseum had become a symbol associated with the city's very survival, while the Circus Maximus remains a massive park and the remains of the Theater of Marcellus are highly visible along the Via del Teatro di Marcello to the west of the Capitoline near the area occupied in antiquity by the Circus Flaminius. With the exception of the Colosseum, the monuments of the imperial period occupy space that was used for theatrical and equestrian entertainments in the Republic.

Roman theaters, even before the end of the third century, were elaborate structures with ornate, multistorey backdrops (the *scaenae frons*) with three doors leading onto the stage, which were heavily exploited by contemporary playwrights. Literary reports of theatrical entertainments in the course of the second century place a large wooden theater in 179 BCE in the area where the Theater of Marcellus now stands (Livy 40. 51). In 174 BCE the censors who placed permanent starting gates and lap counters in the Circus Maximus also erected a stage in the Circus, presumably to take advantage of the preexisting seating (Livy 41.27.6). Seven years later, the praetor M. Anicius put on theatrical events in the Circus as a part of the celebration of his triumph. He brought famous musicians from Greece to play (Polybius. 30.22). As early as 151 BCE there was a proposal to erect a permanent theater, which was rejected on the grounds that theaters were foreign innovations and the shows themselves offered inducements to immorality – as part of his successful motion to prevent the theater's construction, Scipio Nasica, a man of exceptionally conservative views, included the provision that the Roman people should have to stand during performances. Scipio's provision was soon

forgotten and ever more elaborate wooden theaters came to be built, usually on the Campus Martius, with some remaining standing for several years. This may be connected with the *lex Roscia* of 67 BCE reserving the first 14 rows in a theater for members of the equestrian and senatorial order. For the law to be meaningful there should have been some anticipated connection between the number of seats and the anticipated number of their occupants, which might also be related to the fact that these buildings were standing for some length of time and that Cicero regarded the responses of theater crowds as significant indications of popular mood in his lifetime (Cic. *Sest.* 105; *Att.* 2.19.2).

The largest of the late Republican theaters, built in 58 BCE by Marcus Aemilius Scaurus allegedly held 80,000 people. It also held thousands of statues and had a three-storey *scaenae frons* supported by three rows of columns (one for each storey) (Plin. *HN* 34. 36, 36.5, 50, 113–15, 189; Richardson 1992, 380, 385; Bieber 1961, 168). It would not be until 55 BCE that a theater built out of stone would open, this one attached to a temple to get around the admittedly somewhat vestigial ideological objections to a permanent theater's erection at Rome; the remains of Pompey's theater are still visible as they face the Republican temples in the Largo Argentina, attracting occasional interest as some believe that the extant remains offer an indication of the exact spot where Julius Caesar died on March 15, 44 BCE. The theater, with space for 40,000 spectators, opened with massive games that seem to have both attempted to assert Pompey's own quasi-royal status in the year he was consul for the second time, and his personal sophistication. These games backfired on a number of occasions, most notably on the last day when the slaughter of elephants excited the audience's pity rather than wonder. (Pompey had a problem with elephant spectacle; he had also failed to have his triumphal chariot drawn into the city by elephants in 78 BCE) (Cic. *Fam.* 7.1; Plin. *HN* 8.121, 36.115).

The erection of a stone theater, closely associated with the ambitions of a particular politician did not end the construction of wooden theaters, with the most elaborate, that built by Gaius Curio for his father's funeral games in 53 BCE, again remaining standing for several years after initial construction (Plin. *HN* 36. 116–20). A unique feature of Curio's building was that it was on rollers so that it would open out into two theaters, back to back, or, when closed, take the form of an amphitheater for gladiatorial combat. The decades after Caesar's death saw the opening of two more permanent theaters – those of Marcellus and Balbus in 13/12 BCE as well as the construction of the first permanent amphitheater, that of Statilius Taurus after 29 BCE (Richardson 1992, 381–5; Cass. Dio 51.23.1; Suet. *Aug.* 29.5; Richardson 1992, 11). The effect of these projects was to transform the southern edge of the Campus Martius into Augustan Rome's version of London's West End.

The three theaters and the amphitheater represent major shifts in public attitudes towards entertainment. Permanent structures such as these now no

longer represented the excessive indulgence in corrupt foreign practices but the practical subordination of the entertainment industry to dynastic authority, and Augustus tightened up the older Republican rules about seating so that the assembled audience would present a visual microcosm of ordered Roman society (Rawson 1987). Taurus's amphitheater may have been the most powerful illustration of this shift as previous amphitheaters had been built in the Forum itself, symbols of the role of *munera* in the political process. In 123 BCE, Gaius Gracchus had treated an amphitheater as a symbol for his campaign for a new openness in political life when he had the lower courses torn away so that more people could see the combats inside (Plut. *G. Gracc.* 12). This is unlikely to have enabled many more people to see much of anything, but it was a unique statement. Later sets of games were intimately associated with the political ambitions of their sponsors, as men like Caesar sponsored games to promote their pursuit of public office and the distribution of tickets for games came to be governed (without obvious effect) by laws seeking to control electoral corruption (Suet. *Iul.* 26; Caes. *BCiv.* 1.14; Potter 2011, 198–200).

The High Empire and Beyond

The erection of permanent venues reflects an important transformation in the context of Roman entertainment; just as *ludi* joined *munera* in the whirlwind world of second/first century BCE Republican politics so now both were caught up in the creation of an idiom of imperial display. This was not exactly a new development under Augustus. Some earlier spectacles had been designed to assert Rome's ability to match the grand pageants sponsored by kings in the eastern Mediterranean, and Sulla had negotiated with professional associations of Greek performers to come to Rome for spectacles he planned to celebrate his victory in the civil wars of the late 80s BCE. The result of these decisions was that Rome progressed from hosting a largely Italian range of performances to offering a pan-Mediterranean smorgasbord of spectacles, including now plays in Greek as well as Latin, displays by Greek athletes and novel forms of entertainment (Potter 2011, 166–7). The most significant of these new forms of entertainment may have been pantomime, or “rhythmic tragic dance,” as it was known in Greek, which imperial patronage moved from the fringes of the entertainment industry to its core in the century after Augustus (Webb 2012). At the same time, Roman influence likely lies behind the coalescence of Greek professional organizations of actors and professional athletes into a single synod for each. The Greek association of the “Artisans of Dionysus,” for actors, retained its headquarters in Alexandria Troas on Turkey's west coast, while the new “Association of Crown Wearing Victors at the Sacred Games dedicated to Hercules” found the base at Rome in the Julio-

Claudian era that it would retain into the fourth century CE. Both groups had the power to determine their own membership, which involved the award of significant financial benefits to those admitted. At the same time, other Greek spectacles became more common at Rome, with Greek Capitoline games being founded by Nero, and stabilized by Domitian who held them in the new stadium he attached to the imperial palace on the Palatine (Robert 1970). A small theater had earlier been built in the context of the palace, linked to imperial dwellings through the covered walkway (cryptoporticus) that is still in use for the Palatine's visitors today.

In addition to new facilities and new events, perhaps the most notable development of the imperial period was the establishment of permanent facilities for training gladiators. The earliest training ground, or *ludus*, at Rome may have been established on the Campus Martius by Marcus Aemilius Lepidus, the triumvir, and gladiatorial games were still held in multiple locations throughout the city as late as 69 CE (Tac. *Hist.* 2.95). In the wake of Titus's dedication of the Colosseum in 79, Domitian built four more *ludi*, of which the two most prominent, the *ludus magnus* and *ludus matutinus*, both near the Colosseum served as basic training grounds for gladiators and participants in the morning entertainments, typically at this point beast hunts and, around noon, executions. It is less clear where the two other *ludi*, the Gallicus and the Dacicus were located, and why they should be named for the Gauls and Dacians as neither race was especially connected with gladiatorial combat (Richardson 1992, 236–8). It is also under Domitian that we begin to get clear evidence of new variations on the sorts of events that would be presented, including female gladiators, evoking the memory of the mythological Amazons when fighting in the Colosseum (Suet. *Dom* 4; Stat. *Silv.* 1.6.53–4). He also made use of the *naumachia Augusti*, the artificial lake on the Tiber's west bank, where Augustus had staged a mock naval battle in 2 BCE, and Nero a few wild parties in the sixties CE, for mythological spectacles and mock naval battles of his own (Suet. *Tit.* 7.3; Mart. *Spect.* 27).

The construction of the new *ludi* at Rome went hand-in-hand with other transitions, or formalizations of previous practice. Augustus had inherited Caesar's troupe of gladiators, based in Campania, and throughout the Julio-Claudian period, imperial gladiators appear to have been based there, as well as in the area of Rome. These groups, some of whose members may have been recruited into the army of Otho – he deployed 2,000 gladiators against Vitellius in 69 CE – are no longer attested by the end of the first century CE (Tac. *Hist.* 2.11). Presumably the emperor's gladiators were thereafter housed primarily in Rome, and we get evidence for the centralization of the trade in wild beasts for use at games with three zoos, one for herbivores, another for “fierce animals,” and the third for elephants in the area of Rome. Like the *ludi*, the zoos were administered by imperial procurators, and, on one occasion an effort was made to put the elephants to more practical use

(*Epigraphia anfiteatrale* vol. 1 n. 8–10). In 193 CE Didius Julianus tried to have the elephants trained so that he could use them against Septimius Severus. The elephants proved recalcitrant and the effort was abandoned (Cass. Dio 74.16.3).

Despite being formally declared *infames*, or persons without full citizen rights, entertainers at Rome tended to form an economically privileged group. Charioteers could earn phenomenal sums: Gaius Appuleius Diocles, whose career survives for us on an inscription of the second century CE, averaged more than a million sesterces a year for more than twenty years (Friedlander 1908–13 vol. 4, 148–63), and Tiberius is said to have paid two champion gladiators 100,000 HS apiece to fight in games he offered in the memory of his brother, Drusus (Suet. *Tib.* 7). Efforts to curtail expenses on gladiatorial shows, well attested outside of Rome, seem to have had no impact in the city itself, even after Augustus had to subsidize games that would be sponsored by magistrates who no longer saw any political benefit accruing to themselves while the emperor resided in the capital (Cass. Dio 54.2.4, 55.31.4; possibly also implicit at Cass. Dio 54.29.6). It is telling that the law of 19 CE banning members of the senatorial and equestrian orders partaking in gladiatorial or theatrical entertainment seems to have been minimally (if at all) effective (Levick 1983). There were equestrians who complained to Vitellius in 69 CE that he was depriving them of needed revenue when he tried to get them to stop fighting as gladiators (Tac. *Hist.* 2.62.4). Successful entertainers of all sorts moved easily in high society, and, to judge from the admittedly somewhat jaundiced perspective of Juvenal's satires, were not immune to the sort of scandals in which modern tabloids delight (Juv. *Sat.* 6. 81–4). Women of high status might run off with gladiators, senators might wrestle with female wrestlers from Sparta, and one mime actor (at least) figured amongst the lovers of an empress (*Schol ad Juv.* 4.53; Tac. *Ann.* 11.36.1). The emperor Commodus (175–192 CE) took up residence in the *ludus magnus* while training for the event at the *ludi Romani* in which he would try to reenact the labors of Hercules (Cass. Dio 73. 17; Herodian 1.15). His erstwhile mistress convinced a professional wrestler, then residing in the imperial palace, to strangle him on the night of December 31, 192 when her effort to poison him looked to be failing (Cass. Dio 73.22.5). The general relationship between performers and their less exalted fans is perhaps most powerfully illustrated in the riot that took place during the civil war of 238 when gladiators from the *ludus magnus* took the lead in driving the Praetorian Guard, advancing against the rebel regime in Rome, into its camp and laying siege to it (Herodian 7.11.9).

Entertainments of all sorts appear to have remained an imperial monopoly into the fourth century CE, and provided the important additional function of being the primary venue at which the emperor would encounter his subjects and listen to their concerns. So when new imperial palaces were built around

Rome, new circuses were attached to them. Examples include the designer circus linked to Maxentius's palace and the circus that extends from what is now the church of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme in the direction of San Giovanni in Laterano. The latter once served the Sessorian palace, housing Constantine's mother, Helena, on a site previously occupied by a palace of Elagabalus (r. 218–22) and later by Maxentius's horseguards (the place also had a small amphitheater) (Richardson 1992, 360–61). When the primary imperial residence shifted to northern Italy or Trier, games fell once more under the control of the senatorial aristocracy, whose members would stage vastly expensive spectacles as status symbols of their own. A good deal of evidence survives in the correspondence of Quintus Aurelius Symmachus, ancestor of an associate of the Cassiodorus with whom this chapter opened, offering significant details about the games that he sponsored on behalf of his son, which are said to have cost 2,000 pounds of gold (Olympiodorus Fr. 41.2 Blockley). This sum paled in significance in the face of the 4,000 pounds of gold that his contemporary, Maximus paid for games he sponsored, but Maximus was both richer and from a more ambitious family. His grandson would seize the throne in 455 (he was murdered when he failed to halt the subsequent Vandal sack of Rome); another descendent of the same family was still recognized as the leader of the senate in the middle of the sixth century, when he was killed on the orders of Totila, king of the Ostrogoths in 552 (Procop. *Goth.* 8.34.6). This same Totila had presided over the last known chariot race in the Circus Maximus, celebrating his recapture of the city from an eastern Roman army in 549 (Procop. *Goth.* 7.37.4). Totila's games and the death of the contemporary Maximus symbolize the end of Rome's rich entertainment history, for without the resources of wealthy senators, or of kings, the tradition could not continue. The wars between the Ostrogoths and the eastern Roman armies of Justinian effectively destroyed both.

Guide to Further Reading

For the Roman theater, Bieber 1961 remains a valuable and accessible resource, while Richardson 1992 is an extremely useful guide to the history of buildings in Rome for those without ready access to *LTUR*, which is the gold standard in the subject. The notion that plays on Roman historical themes were performed at the *ludi Romani* in the fourth century is championed by Wiseman 1998 (and in many other places); there is a powerful counterargument in Flower 1995, and while she is correct about the later occasions, that does not preclude, given the state of the evidence, Wiseman's view. Humphrey 1986 is still the standard for circuses and the sport itself, while Golvin 1988 is the standard work on the amphitheater; there are dissenting views on the early history of the building type in Welch 2007. For

the history of Rome in the fourth century we are primarily dependent on Livy and the relics of the Roman antiquarian tradition (and of the earlier historiographic tradition; for dealing with this material Oakley (1997–2005) is an essential companion). For the early history of chariot racing, Rawson 1981 is fundamental, though see now the powerful objections to there having been a “Greek” model of chariot racing at Rome in Thuillier 2012. For the development and meaning of seating plans see Rawson 1987 on the theater; though for amphitheaters see Edmondson 1996; for the *collegium poetarum* see Horsfall 2010, 79–95 and now Caldelli 2012; Webb 2012 is convenient and extremely helpful on pantomime; Robert 1970 is crucial on the establishment of Greek dames at Rome; the history of professional associations of athletes in the Roman empire is significantly enhanced by the text published in Petzl and Schwertheim 2006, which can be found in English (with references to some further discussions) in Potter and Mattingly 2010, while Remijsen 2014 offers important updates that range well beyond Egypt. Weidemann 1992 is a good introduction to gladiatorial combat, lacking the sensationalism of some other accounts in English; the two fundamental studies of gladiators remain Ville 1981 and Robert 1940. Potter 2011 offers a survey of Greek and Roman Sport from the Bronze Age to the Byzantine period; while Friedlander (1908–1913) remains a treasure trove of information.

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ENDNOTE

1. I am grateful to Jan Dewitt, Jacqueline Pincus, and Jessica Stephens for thoughtful comments on earlier drafts of this chapter.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

Law and Lawcourts

Leanne Bablitz¹

While the law affects many aspects of our modern daily lives by telling us what we can and cannot do (e.g., we must stop at a red light, we must pay for our coffee before leaving the coffee shop, we must not walk to work naked), it does so relatively invisibly; as individuals we have been socialized to accept this level of influence over our lives and for the most part we do not realize its extent. For most of us, too, if we are fortunate, the legal system of our community, province, or country is quite indiscernible. The courts are contained in specially designated buildings that many of us have never entered. What information most of us have about our courts comes from news reports of particularly interesting or heinous legal struggles. And it is a constant debate in many western nations whether bringing cameras into the courtroom to transmit hearings live into everyone's living room would be a good thing (by making the process more transparent and the population more involved) or a bad thing (advocates will argue their case in the court of public opinion rather than according to the law).

The inhabitants of Rome were far more exposed to their legal system. If they moved about within the city's core at all on a daily basis, they would have seen their legal system at work. In the present examination, the types of courts one would find within the city will be described briefly. The second part of this chapter presents the physical nature of these courts and how they were incorporated within the public and private spaces of Rome.

Rome's Legal System

Rome's legal system contained many judicial elements which varied widely in form and jurisdiction; this description is necessarily general and brief. The main Republican magistrates, namely the consuls, praetors, aediles, and quaestors, all heard disputes, their legal jurisdictions set by the nature of their magisterial responsibilities. Their legal functions continued into the imperial period, though the extent of their participation fluctuated over time, the role of some increasing and of others decreasing. The *praefectus urbi* and the *praefectus praetorio*, magistrates whose power developed during the imperial

period, also had judicial functions (on the former, see Garnsey 1970, 207–18; on the latter Howe 1942; Garnsey 1970, 97n.4; Peachin 1996, 165–6). The magistrates who played the largest roles in dispensing justice within imperial Rome were the two senior praetors, the *praetor urbanus* and the *praetor peregrinus*, and the *praefectus urbi* (on praetors, see Garnsey 1970, 207–18). In the late Republican period the courts of these two praetors were the first stop for any individual seeking justice. In the early imperial period, as the position came to be better defined, the *praefectus urbi* was seen as another magistrate to whom an individual could apply in the first instance. The function of the praetors was to accept or refuse an individual's request to sue another individual, the *urbanus* dealing with cases between Roman citizens, the *peregrinus* between Roman citizens and citizens of other cities in the Empire. If the praetor agreed that the case could proceed, he would then determine the parameters of the dispute as well as the penalty to be exacted should the other party be found in the wrong. Finally, he would appoint the judge to hear the dispute, the *unus iudex*, who could be any adult male the two parties agreed upon, or if they could not agree, someone selected from a state-produced list of potential judges, the *album iudicum* (Bablit 2007, 92–100). At this point, the praetor was finished with an individual case, having handed it over to the *unus iudex*. If the matter was before the *praefectus urbi*, he, unlike the praetors, could pass judgment (thereby fulfilling the role of the *unus iudex*); or if he wished, he too could appoint someone else to hear the case, though not a *unus iudex*. Limited evidence suggests that the court of the *praefectus urbi* was seen as somewhat more favorably disposed to those of lower status within the city. Unlike the courts of the *praetor urbanus* and *praetor peregrinus*, this court also seems to have dealt with both civil and criminal matters.

As is the situation today, civil matters made up the bulk of Rome's litigation. Criminal cases, however, also had to be tried. In the late Republican and early imperial periods the main courts that heard criminal cases were the *quaestiones perpetuae*, standing courts that each dealt with a specific type of crime (e.g., murder and poisoning, forgery, adultery, etc.) and consisted of panels of perhaps 45 judges each (Greenidge 1901, 415–504; Jones 1972, 48–97; Robinson 1995 1–14; Brennan 2000 235–8, 365–70, 416–24, 465–75). There is much dispute regarding how long the individual courts of the *quaestiones perpetuae* functioned in the imperial period. I argue for a later date than many scholars. The calendars of these standing courts were managed by the other praetors, who would be approached by a victim or concerned citizen wishing to lay a charge. These praetors also had the right to refuse the case. In addition to the *quaestiones perpetuae* and the court of the *praefectus urbi*, a person wishing to lay criminal charges could also approach the emperor. The emperor's court developed quite early; already in Augustus's reign we hear of people asking him to adjudicate cases. The emperor heard both criminal and civil cases. Like the court of the *praefectus*

urbi, it seems that some litigants approached the emperor because they felt their status set them at a disadvantage or they were fearful of retribution from the party against whom they were taking action (Garnsey 1970, 90–98; Jones 1972, 94, 113–14; Millar 1977, 228–40; Robinson 1995, 9–11).

With the creation of the courts of the emperor and the *praefectus urbi*, a person had several different courts to which he or she could apply. There was certainly an overlap in jurisdictions within the early imperial period. The importance of the *unus iudex* must be stressed. Often in our study of Roman history we become focused upon political offices and individuals with official titles, even though these individuals featured little in the daily lives of Rome's population. The *praefectus urbi*, for example, was certainly important and played a definite role, but he was one man. The quantity of cases that on any given day were being heard by men acting as single judges was many times larger, and it is at these hearings that we discover Rome's daily legal activity. And, it is these hearings, the most ubiquitous of all in Rome, about which we are the least informed (Quint. *Inst.* 8.3.14; Juv. 13.8–9, 15; Mazeaud 1933; Kelly 1966, 102–17; Garnsey 1970, 207–18; Kelly 1976, 71–92, 112–33). The *praetor urbanus* and the *praetor peregrinus*, the men who channeled cases to these individuals, also played substantial roles.

Having said this, we cannot neglect to consider briefly a few courts about which we are the best informed but which involved the smallest proportion of the population: the Senate, the *recuperatores*, and the *centumviri*. During Augustus's reign the Senate began to meet as a court hearing cases that involved members of the uppermost social classes, and cases that had attracted exceptional publicity. The charges most frequently considered within this court were *maiestas* (treason) and *repetundae* (a governor's maladministration of his province) (Garnsey 1970 17–64; Talbert 1984, 460–87; Harries 2007, 59–71). The *recuperatores* were small boards of three to five judges who seem to have heard cases where, again, one of the litigants feared for his/her personal safety once the opponent was notified of litigation. They also would be involved in determining the penalty in *repetundae* cases where the defendant pled guilty to speed up the process (Kelly 1976, 40–70; Frier 1985, 199–206; Johnston 1987, 67–70; Birks 1988, 43–5, 55–60; Lintott 1990; Rodger 1991, 87–9; Metzger 1997, 75–6). Finally, the *centumviri* consisted of four panels of 45 judges each who would hear cases individually in four separate courts or as one united panel of 180. The cases that went before this court involved, it seems, inheritances and property affairs of higher values (Cic. *De Or.* 1.38.173; Kelly 1976, 1–39; Gagliardi 2002).

Additional minor magistrates also exercised some judicial powers. Among these were the *tresviri capitales*, who it is believed exacted more summary judgments within the regions of Rome (Cascione 1999). The various *curatores* (officials appointed ad hoc to oversee particular projects or tasks) likewise must have had judicial powers within their individual scopes of

authority (Kornemann in *RE* 4.1774–1811; Robinson 1992, 86–105). Unfortunately, we are quite uninformed about how these magistrates participated in keeping peace, resolving disputes and exacting justice.

The Courts within Rome's Physical Landscape

Rome's courts were entirely portable. A single magistrate's paraphernalia was minimal: a tribunal (a wooden platform three to four feet high (c. 0.9–1.2 meters) with a surface area of approximately nine square feet (c. 0.8 square meters), on which the magistrate would sit on a particular form of folding stool known as a *sella curulis*; he would have with him his guard (e.g., lictors for praetors, or consuls or members of the Praetorian Guard for the emperor) and perhaps some secretaries to organize his day's activities if he was a magistrate or the emperor, both of whom had to deal with a large number of individuals wanting to begin legal proceedings (Johnson 1927; Bablitz 2007, 29–31; 2008; 2009). The secretaries may have been given the comfort of small tables and chairs for a long day's work. A few wooden benches might also have been available for those litigants waiting their turn before the court, or perhaps for interested audience members. A *unus iudex* could have had even less equipment than this, not being entitled to official guards and not needing secretaries to record anything. Even courts that consisted of panels of judges had only slightly greater needs: wooden benches to accommodate all the judges (Bablitz 2007, 53–6; 2010). None of these courts involved any particular piece of equipment or architectural element, such as a permanent altar, that would necessitate a court being established in one fixed space. For this reason, there is no such thing as an architecturally defined courthouse. And yet, while the courts did not make a physical impact on the archaeological record specifically (we might argue that Roman basilicas and porticoes were designed with that purpose in mind, although these were multifunctional spaces), we are able to place them within Rome's topography through examination of literary texts and some archaeological findings. Several of the courts availed themselves of the many multifunctional spaces found throughout the city, the most important and frequently used of these being the fora: the Forum Romanum, the Forum of Julius Caesar, the Forum of Augustus and the Forum of Trajan.

The Forum Romanum, the earliest of the fora, was used by the Romans from the Republican period and into the imperial period to accommodate legal activities (*LTUR* 2.325–43). A magistrate or judge could set his court up within the great open central area next to his fellow magistrate or a vendor, or he may have positioned himself at the top of one of the sets of steps (such as those found in front of the Basilica Iulia and the Basilica Aemilia. In the late Republican and early Augustan period the court of the *praetor urbanus* can be

placed quite confidently at the eastern end of the Forum (the location shifted to the west following the construction of the temple of Julius Caesar; Coarelli 1985, 166–80; Richardson 1973, 225; Frier 1985, 57–62; David 1995, 378–9, 382; Carnabuci 1996, 19–28). During the same period, the ancient texts say that the *praetor peregrinus* was positioned in the middle of the Forum, perhaps on the site commonly known as the “Grove of Marsyas”, which recent studies have shown could have accommodated a large tribunal (Welin 1953, 75–97; Richardson 1973, 219–22; Giuliani and Verduchi 1987, 95–103; David 1995, 376–7). A number of the *quaestiones perpetuae* were held in the Forum Romanum in the late Republican period and likely continued to be so into the imperial period, perhaps employing the large tribunal of the *praetor peregrinus* if it was not in use (Coarelli 1985, 176–80; David 1992, 728–30). We also hear of several emperors holding court within the Forum Romanum; apparently Claudius was there almost daily (Suet. *Dom.* 8; Cass. Dio 57.7.2, 60.4.3, 66.10.5, 69.7.1). It appears that in the minds of some Romans this Forum came to be strongly associated with legal events. Martial speaks of “sour lawsuits in the sad Forum” (5.20.6).

In the second half of the first century BCE, it seems that the Forum Romanum, which Horace called the “*differtum forum*”, or “the stuffed-full forum” (*Epist.* 1.6.59), was no longer able to accommodate the wide variety of events. Julius Caesar’s new forum, laid out immediately to the north had been completed in 44 BCE and was being used for legal activities. Based on some rather general comments made by Ovid (*Ars Am.* 1.79–88), it appears that on occasion cases involving divorce and perhaps adultery were dealt with in this forum (Bablit 2007, 45–6). It does not, however, seem to have eased the pressure enough (App. *B Civ.* 2.15.102; for legal activities being held in three fora, see Sen. *Ira* 2.9.4; Suet. *Aug.* 29.1; Mart. 3.38.3–4). By 3 BCE it was joined by the Forum of Augustus, to which the *quaestiones perpetuae* were moved (Suet. *Aug.* 29.1), together with the courts of the *praetor urbanus* and the *praetor peregrinus*, perhaps at the same time. Courts in the Forum of Augustus feature in two sets of documents dating from 40–75 CE, known as the *Tabulae Herculanenses* (TH) and the *Tabulae Sulpiciorum* and found at Herculaneum and near Pompeii respectively. Several are *vadimonia*, (guarantees undertaken by the litigants that they would both show up before another magistrate at a designated time on a particular day (*TPSulp.* 13, 14, 15; TH 6, 13, 14, 15). These individuals were meeting to continue their dispute before the praetors in Rome because the local magistrates did not have the requisite jurisdiction and they had agreed to meet at variety of specifically identified spots within the Forum of Augustus: in front of a particular statue, or one of the porticus columns, or beside the altar on the steps of the temple of Mars Ultor (Bablit 2007, 16–21, 23–7). The forum will have teemed with many more people just like these, from communities throughout Italy and even beyond. The two praetors would arrive at the crack of dawn to work their way through the list of litigants lining up for the day, while the expectant

judges for one *quaestio perpetua* were gathering to begin a trial for murder and others were hoping to deliver the verdict on a case concerning forgery. We can place the *praetor urbanus* with some confidence in the western exedra (Bablit 2007, 19–20). It would be reasonable to balance his court by placing the *praetor peregrinus* within the eastern exedra (Bablit 2007, 23–24). This positioning of both magistrates would have worked well with the artistic ideology of the Forum itself. The *quaestiones* needed a large area to accommodate the panel of possibly 45 judges (Bablit 2007, 99–100). Weather permitting, the central open area of the forum could have served many panels at once. The high walls of the forum would have provided shade for a good portion of the area for most of the day. During rainy days the courts may have crowded into the porticoes, which would have been manageable, although not ideal for the group.

While the chief praetors and the *quaestiones perpetuae* found their home in the Forum Romanum and later within the Forum of Augustus, other magistrates and judges can be linked with locations elsewhere in the city. Emperors dealt with cases in the imperial palace, the imperial gardens, the Portico of Livia, and the Pantheon (Suet. *Aug.* 33.1, *Claud.* 33.1; Tac. *Ann.* 11.2–3; Cass. Dio 55.33.5, 67.17.1, 68.10.2, 69.7.1, 76.11.1; *Acta Isidori Rec.* B Col. 2; Bablit 2007, 35–7). Disappointingly weak evidence hints that the court of the *praefectus urbi* could be found in the area just to the north and east of the Forum Romanum, in the region that was to become the Temple of Peace. The court may then have occupied the room within that complex that contained the *Forma Urbis* (a large third-century wall map of the city) and still later may have moved to a location near the Temple of Tellus, bordered by the Baths of Titus and Trajan, the Basilica of Maxentius, and the Colosseum (*LTUR* 4.159–60; Anderson 1984, 116–17). Aulus Gellius provides our only definite location in which we know that a consul heard a case; he was present at a consul's court in the Forum of Trajan (*NA* 13.25.2). Finally, we must note the two courts most strongly linked with individual buildings: the Senate, which utilized the senate house most frequently for its meetings even when it was holding a trial, and the *centumviri*, who used the Basilica Iulia located on the south side of the Forum Romanum (Senate meeting locations: Talbert 1984, 113–20; *centumviri*: *LTUR* 1.177–9; David 1983, 238; Richardson 1992, 52–3; Bablit 2007, 62).

While all legal hearings were public in nature, courts could be held in the judge's own house as well. Vitruvius (*De Arch.* 6.5.2) advises those designing homes for magistrates and high-ranking officials serving the state to make sure that there is adequate public space to accommodate legal hearings (discussed further by Wallace-Hadrill 1994, 10–14, 47 and Métraux 1999). Unfortunately, we have no anecdotal accounts of hearings in such locations.

Rome's lawcourts were, by modern standards, readily accessible to members of the public not involved in the proceedings. There is no evidence that access

to any court (except perhaps that of the emperor – especially if the case was heard *in camera*) was in any way restricted when a hearing was in progress. Hearings before individual magistrates positioned within a public space must have looked, in physical terms, much like what we typically see with street entertainers and buskers, who draw crowds around themselves. The closest ancient equivalent is likely a mime performance (Beacham 1991, 129–40; Marshall 2006, 7–12; Webb 2008, 95–115).

In Rome, a hearing before an individual judge must have looked very similar. The judge, be he a magistrate or a *unus iudex*, would select a location within a multifunctional space. He would use a platform (“tribunal”) or an existing architectural feature of the space, perhaps the landing of a staircase, to elevate himself. The two litigants would stand before him and the hearing would begin. Passers-by would see the hearing in progress and, depending upon their own time constraints and curiosity, may or may not have stopped to listen.

A judge might choose to position his tribunal close to a statue of a particular deity or of a famous ancestor. An inscription found in the family villa near Lucus Feroniae, north of Rome (AE 1972, 174), for example, a copy of one set up in the Roman Forum (AE 1982, 63), records no less than nine honorary statues awarded by the Senate in 56 CE, at the request of the emperor Nero, to Lucius Volusius Saturninus, following his death at the age of 93. One showed him *sella curuli residens* – seated on his magistrate’s curule stool (Schäfer 1989; Fejfer 2008, 444–5) – and was set up in the Porticus Lentulorum, near the theatre of Pompey. Such statues were the principal rewards for public service and the particular choice of figure type and the location of the statue would be made with a view to adding to the prestige of the honour (Eck 1992). Precisely where the porticus was in relation to the theatre is not certain (LTUR 4.125), but its name ‘of the Lentuli’ shows it had been built by an ancestor of Saturninus, and it is possible that he regularly held court there. The porticus had probably been designed (as were those in the Forums of Augustus and Trajan) with niches in the walls or bases behind the columns ready to receive statues, which would honour the gods as well as magistrates, and a judge might choose to position his tribunal in the presence of his favourite deity or one of the more illustrious members of his own family.

The installation of the court personnel as well as the positioning and movements of the audience were essentially the same whatever the size of the court. The courtroom whose physical nature we know the most about is that of the *centumviri*, which met in the Basilica Iulia. Within its four courts the two litigating parties sat on benches facing each other. The benches for the judges, which likely were arranged in two blocks of at least four or five benches each, made up the third side of a square. The presiding magistrate’s tribunal would be positioned between the two blocks. The distance between the facing benches of the litigants would be increased to a point that allowed the front benches of the judges to see both litigants, resulting in a U-shape. The top of

the U would be closed off with benches as well, occupied by friends and family of the litigants or of the participating advocates. Thus, we have an open central rectangular area delineated by the litigants' benches on two sides, the first row of the judges' benches on the one longer side, and the benches occupied by members of the audience on the other long side. Just as there were four to five additional rows of benches behind the first row to accommodate the rest of the judges, evidence suggests that on the other three sides of the central area there were additional benches behind the litigants and the audience (on the fourth side). Finally, around this core of seated audience it appears that additional audience members could and did stand, as described by Pliny (*Ep.* 6.33; see also 2.14), who also talks of people hanging over the balcony of the upper gallery of the Basilica Iulia to watch proceedings. Members of the audience and public spectators would flow in and out during the hearing, mimicking to a certain extent the transient nature of the audience before single judges, as discussed above. A *quaestio* court meeting in one of the fora was probably very similar to the *centumviri* since the panel of judges for each were very similar if not identical in size (45 men; Bablitz 2007, 51–70, esp. Fig. 2.2). Rome's lawcourts were thus highly visible within the daily public lives of Rome's inhabitants. Any involvement in public business would bring an individual into the city's core. To go about that business without passing through at least one of the fora would be difficult, considering the layout of the streets. In addition, there were numerous other public spaces on major thoroughfares where one might find a *unus iudex*, magistrate, or even the emperor hearing a case.

Such visibility served various ends. In a society with few methods of mass communication, the public display of the courts advertised and reinforced the rule of law. Magistrates and emperors hearing cases demonstrated the transparency of government, reassuring all that wrongs could be righted. The hierarchy of power was also made clear. Those who served on the *album iudicum*, and would fill the panels in the *quaestiones perpetuae*, were firmly upper class, having met stringent financial requirements for eligibility. However, at the same time, the “inclusive” aspect of Roman law was very apparent. Any respectable adult male citizen could be asked to serve as a *unus iudex* – and a passer-by on the streets of Rome could see many serving as such on any given day. Such participation may have given many average citizens a sense of empowerment, that the legal system was something of which they, too, could be a part in a role other than litigant. Such public display of the court process also contributed to the public persona of many participants, for good or bad. Advocates striving to enter politics hoped to raise their public image by success in the courts. We hear of visitors to Rome wanting to see famous advocates. A *unus iudex* sitting in judgment in some public space would take pride in the fact that the two litigants respected him enough to ask him to judge their dispute, and now everyone else on the street would become aware of that respect. There was also a negative side to the courts' ability to

create, alter or increase one's public image. Bribery is known to have occurred, and it would be a potent message for all to see if a powerful, wealthy litigant managed to win his case against a less powerful opponent even though his case was weak. A much grander political statement was made by this very visible legal system, which applied to all Roman citizens. For both inhabitants of and visitors to Rome, seeing hearings involving litigants from across Italy and even the empire would show to all the extent of Rome's dominion as well as the city's role as the very nexus of that empire. A foreigner entering the Forum of Augustus would be struck by the display, the organization, and the power that was Rome. The citizen living just beyond the forum's wall in Subura, seeing the foreigners searching out the courts, may consider his citizenship an advantage, while at the same time realizing the greatness of Rome with such a diversity of inhabitants approaching the courts for legal opinions.

The visibility of the courts may also have served a very practical function. In a culture in which one's reputation was so important, even the prospect of airing a dispute before the eyes of all and sundry in a public setting may have encouraged individuals to resolve a disagreement out of court. While it seems possible that one could to a certain extent minimize the public impact of a hearing before a *unus iudex* by, for example, holding it in a private house rather than in the Forum Romanum, such a location had to be agreed upon by the two disputants. If you knew that your opponent was wishing to embarrass you publicly as much as possible, little could be done unless you settled before the matter reached the courts.

And for the public, the Roman courts provided something that modern western courts strive to minimize: entertainment. All passers-by could be tempted to stop and listen to two litigants arguing before a *unus iudex* over whether one should have to pay because his slave broke an amphora of wine owned by his opponent, or to an advocate presenting to a panel of *quaestio* judges the reasons to find his client innocent of murdering his wife. The entertainment of such contests provided a less bloody alternative to the arena and offered something for everyone; some might be interested in observing the rhetorical skills of a particular advocate, while others might just like to watch two litigants get mad and hurl abuse at each other.

Guide to Further Reading

The bulk of this chapter is based on Bablitz (2007), though some arguments are taken further. On Roman procedure the best single-volume work is still Greenidge (1901), but see also Crook (1967, 68–97), Frier (1985, 42–78), Galsterer (1996). Also on the procedure of various courts see Kelly (1966, 1976), Jones (1972), Talbert (1984), and Harries (2007). For a discussion of

the layout of a Republican public courtroom see David (1992, 482–7). On using municipal laws to fill in the gaps of our knowledge of Roman procedure see Rodger (1991). For work that considers the social setting of Roman law, see Crook (1967) and David (1992). On the physical aspects of the Roman courtroom see Johnson (1927), which is dated, and off track in spots, but asks really good questions; Richardson (1973) also asks good questions, as does David (1995). On aspects of rhetoric and the advocate a great introduction can be found in Dominik and Hall (2007).

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ENDNOTE

1. This chapter was submitted to the editors by the author in 2010 and was therefore unable to take account of any literature published after that date.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN

The Roman Church

John Curran

Introduction

More than any other area of enquiry into the world of antiquity, the investigation of Christianity sets modern perspectives and the ancient material evidence challengingly together. This is particularly true of the history of the Christian community of Rome. The city is home to the Roman Catholic Church which owns and administers many of the most significant sites and actively preserves traditions which claim ancient and specifically apostolic roots. The earliest modern investigators of *Roma sotterranea* were frequently supported by Catholic patrons and a distinctive “Roman (Catholic)” interest sustains some of the most prestigious research institutions exploring the subject. This outlook attaches significant value to the Patristic tradition, the surviving literature attributed to the “fathers of the church”, as a vital resource for reconstructing the history of the early Christian community, and the highest standards of analysis of this literature complement the archaeological scholarship. In contrast, very influential research on the subject also emanates from academic centers elsewhere which are self-consciously independent of the Catholic tradition. Here, Patristic literature takes its place as evidence with the understanding that no one tradition can be presumed, and the awareness that important dissenting voices from antiquity have not survived. Much more prominent in this approach to the subject are comparative analyses, examining the surviving evidence both in its broadest historical context and also drawing upon theoretical models of sociological enquiry (Snyder 2003, 6–16; Humphries 2008, 89–91; Jensen 2008; Rutgers 2000, 9–41).

As nowhere else, then, the evidence for the early Christians of Rome does not speak for itself. The subject is suffused with powerful contemporary perceptions of theological legitimacy and authority. The challenge for the historian of the Roman church is to isolate interpretative themes, to present the most important evidence at the core of academic discussion and to acknowledge that the ideas expressed below take their place alongside the work of others.

Beginnings

“Cnaeus Cornelius Hispalus, praetor peregrinus (139 BCE)... compelled the Jews, who attempted to infect the Roman customs with the cult of Jupiter Sabazius, to return to their homes”.

(Val. Max. 1. 3. 3)

When the Jews of Rome first enter the historical record, they do so as a source of concern to the Roman state because of their proselytizing. There was a clear perception that they were oriental in outlook, even if the precise identity of their god was not clear to observers. By the time of the late Republic they were a people who had been the subject of a number of legal rulings by Roman officials (Rajak 1984). They had become a distinctive and recognizable component of the city's population (Cic. *Flac.* 28. 66–7); the city quarter across the Tiber (Transtiberim/Trastevere) became associated with the Jews who numbered perhaps 40–50,000 by the early years of the first century and who could attend up to fifteen synagogues (Philo *Leg.* 155; Green 2010, 1–23; Leon 1995, 15, 135–66; Richardson 1998).

About 58 CE, Paul of Tarsus wrote to followers of Jesus in Rome. He greeted 28 people individually, and their names suggest that Rome was home to believers of fairly modest status and mixed ethnicity (Green 2010, 28–39; Jeffers 1991, 20; Lampe 1991, 225). “Andronicus and Junia” had been believers in Jerusalem prior to Paul himself (*Romans* 16. 7) and he acknowledged those who were observing Jewish festivals and food laws (*Romans* 14. 1–15). The letter was the longest written by him and pitched a controversial message to what was clearly a variegated readership, making a passionate address to observant Jews, sympathizers, and interested gentiles, but making it clear that old Jewish certainties had made way for a new dispensation: “...is God the God of the Jews only? Is he not the God of gentiles also? Yes, of gentile also, since God is one; and he will justify the circumcised on the ground of faith and the uncircumcised through the same faith. Do we then overthrow the Law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the Law” (*Romans* 3. 29–31).

Some thirty years later, the author of *1 Clement*, a document written in Rome and addressed to the troubled Christian community in the city of Corinth in Greece, invoked the ultimate sacrifice made by Paul but also by Peter with whom some Christians in Rome had come to associate themselves (5. 2). Papias of Hierapolis in the early second century believed that Peter had been accompanied on his journeys by “Mark”, an “interpreter” or “expositor,” leading some to think that this “Mark” was the author of the earliest gospel, a document therefore written in Rome (Euseb. *Hist. Eccl.* 3. 39; Brown and Meier 1983, 196–8).

Between them, Peter perhaps but certainly Paul seem to have pressurized followers of Jesus to decide whether they were Jews or not. Famously, sometime in the 40s CE, the emperor Claudius took action against the Jews of Rome on account of disturbances caused by “Chrestus” a name widely (though not conclusively) understood as a reference to Christ (Suet. *Claud.* 25. 4; cf. Cass. Dio 60. 6. 6; Green 2010: 26–7; Goodman 2007, 387). Pagan observers began to detect the divergence. According to Augustine, Seneca’s essay *de superstitio* “...mentions the Christians, (who were) most inimical towards the Jews, only in neutral terms, so that he may not praise them against the old customs of his native land, or repudiate them against his own will. But concerning the Jews, he said, ‘In the meantime the custom of this most wicked race grows so much, so that it is received through the whole land; conquered ones give laws to their victors’” (*De Civ. D.* 6. 11). But their emergence with a distinctive identity brought great danger for the Christians of Rome. In the wake of a disastrous fire in 64 CE for which the notoriously excessive Nero was held responsible by many, the Christians and their activities provided a community upon which suspicion could be settled. Specifically, according to Tacitus (*Ann.* 15. 44. 2–8), Christians were known for their “abominations” (*flagitia*) and “hatred of the human race (*odium generis humani*).” Swiftly held investigations led to the condemnation of several hundred followers of Christ as the commonest criminals: “It is related that in his [Nero’s] time Paul was beheaded in Rome itself, and that Peter likewise was crucified, and the title of ‘Peter and Paul,’ which is still given to the cemeteries there, confirms the story...” (Euseb. *Hist. Eccl.* 2. 25). A precedent had been set: henceforth simply being a Christian, or professing such an identity (the *nomen Christianum*) was to be by definition a member of an illegal, dangerous, and degenerate group (cf. *1 Peter* 4. 12–16; Ste Croix 1963).

The Ways of God

It is likely that the apostles enjoyed a preeminence among Christians in Rome but it is clear that they were not the only leaders among the followers of Jesus in the city. With their passing and the loss of eyewitnesses to the life and times of Jesus, the question of authority among believers became an important issue and there are indications that conflict and anxiety were significant problems (Green 2010, 60–119; Thomassen 2004; Brown and Meier 1983, 124–60). Documents of the period give few indications that the Christians of Rome followed a single governing figure. *1 Clement* written in Rome c. 96 CE upheld to the unruly Corinthian community the principle of legitimate authority but it was wielded by an appropriate *group* as opposed to any

individual (57. 1; Jeffers 1991, 90–119. Cf. Green 2010, 92–9). Taken together with the later tradition of “titular” churches (*tituli* – see below), it seems that the Christians of Rome were dispersed among a number of meeting-places, each under the leadership of “presbyter-deacons” whose designation was apparently interchangeable well into the second century.¹ When Ignatius of Antioch was on his way to martyrdom in Rome, his letters to various small Christian communities assumed that there was a single *episkopos* in each but the term is conspicuously absent in his epistle to Rome which has led some to think that the subject of leadership was too delicate to address in the context of several independently minded communities in the empire’s capital (*Letter to the Smyrneans* 8; Hall 2006a, 417–18; cf. Green 2010, 93–4).

The emergence of a “pap(p)as,” a “father” to all the Christians of Rome, cannot be clearly identified prior to the middle years of the second century CE. Some hold that the office emerged out of tensions and conflicts between Christian groups in the city but others see it as inherent in the concept of a single Christian *ekklesia*, the term of fundamental importance in the earliest literature generated by believers (Green 2010, 92–3; Lampe 1989, 301–7; Heid 2007, 408).

Away from theological arguments, charity to those in need is easily underestimated as an explanation for the steady growth of the Christian community. Under *episkopos* Soter (166–174 CE) there existed a care system for those both inside and beyond the city and by the middle of the third century the Roman church was supporting at least 155 clerics and 1,500 registered recipients of relief (Euseb. *Hist. Eccl.* 4. 23. 10, 6. 43. 11. cf. Justin Martyr *Apology* 1. 65. 6–7).

Some of the earliest Christian teachers had urged accommodation with the authority of emperors but members of the community were still victims of periodic outbreaks of localized persecution (*Romans* 13. 1; Green 2010, 120–69; Price 2008). The reluctance of the emperors to legislate against Christians was superseded by a new policy instituted by the emperor Decius (249–51) who ordered all citizens to sacrifice to the gods. The Christians of Rome, who now included senators and *equites*, became victims of the legislation that targeted property as well as persons (Cyprian *Letters* 59. 9, 80; Euseb. *Hist. Eccl.* 7. 10; Green 2010, 142–50; Salinger 2002). Hippolytus wrote of Jews and pagans making common cause, believers being attacked in the streets, and the tombs of the dead being desecrated (*Commentary on Daniel* 1. 23, 4. 51; Frend 1965, 322–3). There seem to have been relatively few executions, however; Bishop Fabian was among a small number of Christians martyred in January 250. But mass apostasy convulsed the community and the bishop’s see was vacant for 14 months (Cyprian *Letters*. 8. 2–3; 9. 1). Those who had “fallen away” (*lapsi*) lost the support they had received and sought readmission to the Christian community when the danger had passed. Their

appeals eventually succeeded but only after protracted and uncomfortable negotiations (Green 2010, 144–55).

Material Culture

Given their humble status, it is likely that private dwellings (*domus*) or small rented rooms accommodated meetings of the earliest followers of Jesus in Rome (Jensen 2006, 582; Krautheimer 1986, 28–30).² Some 25 of the oldest Christian churches of the city of Rome have long been afforded “titular” status, acknowledging a tradition that the early community gathered for meeting and worship at a number of sites in the city. The “titulus Byzantis,” lying beneath the present church of SS. Giovanni e Paolo, may be the earliest example. The oldest structures beneath the church seem to be the remains of an *insula* complex of living accommodation and small shops, dating to the second century but offering no definitive material proof of Christian occupation. Similarly, beneath the “titular” church of San Clemente lie the remains of a pagan shrine to Mithras, itself housed in fairly modest accommodation of indeterminate ownership (Snyder 2003, 140–53; White 1996–7, 111–23; Jeffers 1991, 63–89).

In caring for their dead, the earliest Christians shared cemetery zones with Jews and pagans (Green 2010, 170–206). The burial sites were overwhelmingly anonymous, whether above ground or in one of over fifty tunnel networks (“catacombs”) extending out from the great roads beyond the city’s boundary (Green 2010, 170–206; Rutgers 2000; Fiocchi Nicolai, Bisconti and Mazzoleni 1999). Among few distinctions between pagans and Christians, the latter held commemorative meals (*refrigeria*) on the anniversary of the death or deposition, while pagans continued to gather in honor of the deceased on their birthday (*dies natalis*) (Heid 2007, 409). Probably under *episkopos* Zephyrinus (198–217) the Christians of Rome acquired for their exclusive use a cemetery which became associated with one “Callistus,” either Zephyrinus’s deacon (and successor), or the name of a wealthy donor (Hippolytus *Refutation of All Heresies* 9). Other dedicated catacombs followed, associated with individuals: Priscilla, Domitilla, Praetextatus, Calepodius and Novatianus, the humility of their ceremonies attracting derisive comment from pagan observers (Min Fel. *Oct.* 12. 6, 38. 3–4).

Identifiably “Christian” art is difficult to characterize accurately in the earliest history of the Roman community and it is to be sought among a mass of symbols in common use (Green 2010, 195–9; Jensen 2008, 104–19; Snyder 2003, 23–122; Elsner 1998, 3). The small size of the community may have been a factor but, more fundamentally, the perception of the need for a distinctive Christian symbology may not have existed (Stark 1996, 8–9;

Finney 1994, 110). Crucifixes or crosses seem not to have been depicted by the early Christians of Rome in either their places of worship or burial. Only one *graffito*, from the servants' quarters of the Palatine and dating perhaps to c. 200 CE, shows a crucified figure with the head of a donkey accompanied by the apparently mocking scrawl "Alexamenos worships [his] god." The drawing stands so squarely against what we know of apparently Christian art elsewhere that there can be little doubt that it is the work of a non-believer (Tert. *Apol.* 16.1; Snyder 2003, 61–2; Crossan and Reed 2005, 367–9).

Some of the symbols used by Christians, however, were new in funerary contexts: the fish (*IXΘΥΣ*) is a famous acrostic and the depiction of anchors may have evoked ideas of secure attachment to community or the truth, or both. Other images were long known from non-Christian art: shepherds, lambs, doves, and boats held an obvious attraction for Christians. The most frequently occurring figure is the "orans"; a standing and frequently veiled female figure with arms outstretched. In imperial iconography the figure frequently symbolized *pietas* towards emperors and in the Christian context it is perhaps best understood as an appeal to solidarity with the community. Frescoes in catacomb galleries depict Jesus as a philosopher, instructing the faithful, or with the latter at table, accompanied by images of bread and wine. Among biblical scenes, portrayals of Daniel in the lions' den and Susanna falsely accused have some prominence; the healing miracles of Jesus, together with depictions of the raising of Lazarus perhaps show Christians seeking consolation in difficult personal times (Green 2010, 195–9; Jensen 2008, 104–19; Snyder 2003, 67–127, 302–5).

No unambiguously "Christian" tombstones are known from the first and second centuries (Tabernee 2008) but in 217, a certain Ampelius brought home to the city the remains of his former master M. Aurelius Prosenes, who had died while travelling with the emperor Commodus. His sarcophagus bore no obviously Christian symbols and only the small and modest inscription "Prosenes was received unto God (*receptus ad deum*) five days before the Nones of [March]...". But the phrase, taken together with the absence of the normal pagan abbreviation "D.M." (*dis manibus* – "to the gods of the underworld"), has convinced many that Prosenes was in fact a Christian (Deichmann 1967, no. 929; Snyder 2003, 213–5 and Lampe and Steinhauser 2003, 330–34; Lee 2000, 40–42). The very few surviving and apparently Christian sarcophagi from the third and fourth centuries which have relief panels demonstrate the popularity of Old Testament scenes, from Adam and Eve to the sacrifice of Isaac. Among New Testament episodes the resurrection of Lazarus is notable. There are no references to the Passion of Christ; the Jesus depicted in the art of the early Christians of Rome was a worker of wonders, not a suffering God incarnate (Snyder 2003, 298).

Roman Christians, like Christians elsewhere, retained a special reverence for those who had met their deaths in the course of professing their beliefs.

Eusebius in the fourth century knew of Roman traditions which preserved details of places in the city associated with its most famous martyrs: “It is related that in his [Nero’s] time Paul was beheaded in Rome itself, and that Peter likewise was crucified, and the title of ‘Peter and Paul,’ which is still given to the cemeteries there, confirms the story, no less than does a writer of the Church named Caius, who lived when Zephyrinus was bishop of Rome (c. 200)...[Caius writes]: ‘But I can point out the trophies of the Apostles, for if you will go to the Vatican or to the Ostian Way you will find trophies of those who founded this Church.’” Eusebius explains that bishop Dionysius of Corinth (c. 170) provides further corroboration in the statement: “By so great an admonition you bound together the foundations of the Romans and Corinthians by Peter and Paul, for both of them taught together in our Corinth and were our founders, and together also taught in Italy in the same place and were martyred at the same time” (*Hist. Eccl.* 2. 25).

The tradition is undeniable, but the identification and dating of the tombs of Rome’s foremost martyrs are the most controversial aspect of archaeological investigation into the early Christians of the city. Contemporary Christians have strong motivations for both optimal and minimal interpretations of the physical remains (Frend 1996, 108–11). The most controversial modern investigation took place beneath the crypt of Saint Peter’s Basilica in Rome by Vatican-appointed archaeologists and scholars in the 1940s (Apollonj Ghetti 1951). They uncovered a ‘street’ of tombs – pagan and apparently Christian mausolea juxtaposed – running beneath the nave of the present basilica (and by definition the Basilica of Constantine) and up to a point on the slope of the Vatican hill which Constantine had sought to enclose within his church (Figure 27.1). A small open area (“campo P”) was bordered by a wall which had built into it a modest honorific structure termed the “aedicula” by the excavators. A number of niches were identified but none contained human remains. The earliest detectable burials in the area were very humble, dating to the first and second century but tombs created thereafter were clearly aligned to cluster around the area marked by the “aedicula”. At some date a buttressing wall (which the excavators termed the *muro rosso* “red wall” because of its painted plaster facing) had been constructed adjacent to the “aedicula” and into which a small marble-lined receptacle (or *loculus*) had been inserted. The plaster of the wall itself was very badly worn and scratched. What the excavators had recovered, therefore, was evidence of burial activity at the site; precisely undatable monumentalization of a particular point in “campo P” and the clear focus of later Christian burials there. Controversial and much-disputed analysis of the scratchings on the red wall claimed to have detected numerous coded references to the apostle Peter. And accompanying investigations recovered some unregarded human remains of an old man which had been removed from the “loculus” by the Vatican excavators’ site manager (Guarducci 1958 and 1960). These are now on display beneath the present basilica. Given the nature of the enquiry, it is

likely that any conclusions reached would have been the subject of vigorous challenge. The scientific standards set for modern archaeological investigation were not consistently in place during the work of the Vatican team (Liverani and Spinola 2010; Snyder 2003, 189–204; Lampe and Steinhauser 2003, 104–16; Holloway 2004, 120–50; Toynbee and Ward Perkins 1956). But much of the evidence unearthed is compelling proof of the site’s importance for the early Christians of the city.

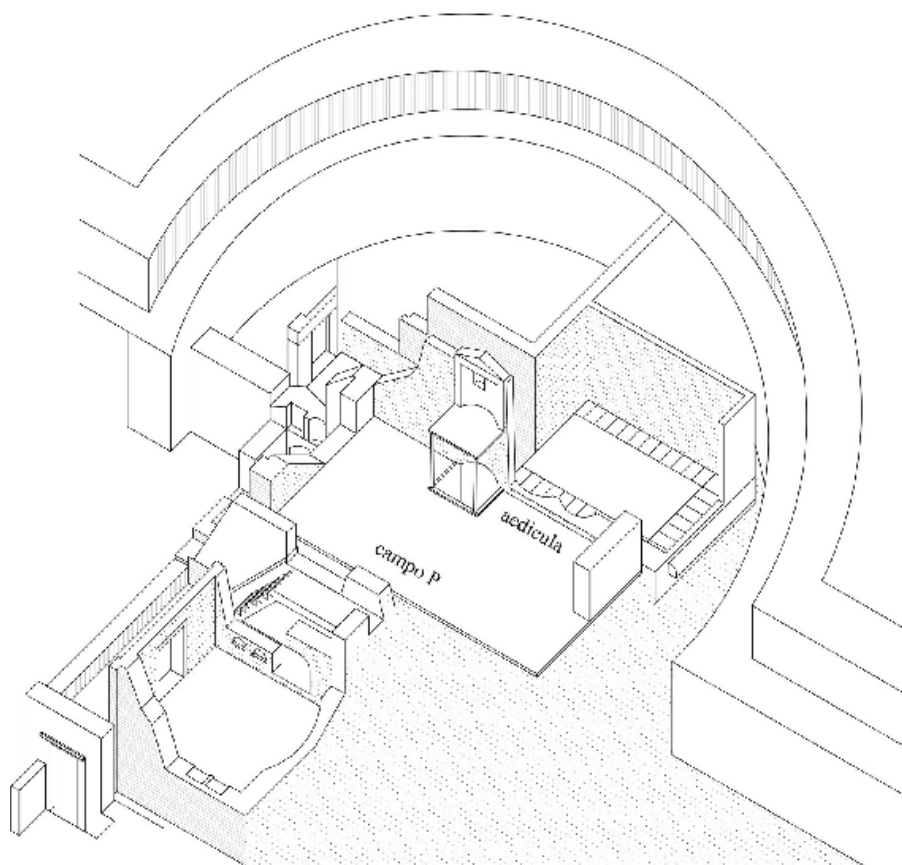


Figure 27.1 Detail of necropolis under Saint Peter’s Basilica, Rome.

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Constantine

Constantine entered Rome in October 312 not as the protector of the Christians but as the liberator of the city from the “tyranny” of Maxentius (*CIL* 6.1139). For all his alleged gratitude to the great deity who had delivered him victory, he retained a shrewd understanding of political reality. His earliest basilica for the Christians of Rome (313) at the Lateran did not

enclose some sacred site but accomplished the destruction of the camp of Maxentius's élite horseguard (*equites singulares*), now disbanded. An imposing basilica in the architectural idiom of the age followed: a large rectangular hall of simple brickwork, apsed at one end and designed to accommodate several thousand people (Brandenburg 2005, 20–37; Holloway 2004, 57–60).

In the *suburbium* on the Via Appia, close to the grandiose circus of Maxentius and the mausoleum for his family, a great basilica dedicated to Saint Sebastian rose over a site long associated with the apostles Peter and Paul (Brandenburg 2005, 63–9). An open space for gatherings (*triclia*) beneath the nave of the church seems to mark the site where Christians gathered to honor Peter and Paul jointly, from at least 258 if not before. Some 190 graffiti make reference to *refrigeria* to Peter and Paul being “promised” or “arranged” there. Although the actual graves of the apostles seem to have been located elsewhere, it has been suggested that their remains may have been “translated” and housed for a period at the Via Appia site for some unknown reason.³ The basilica which now covered the site was constructed in *opus listatum* very similar to that used close by in the Maxentian complex and the *Liber Pontificalis* fails to attribute the church to Constantine. That Maxentius might have been the builder of the church has been suggested, but it is perhaps more likely that the skills of those who had worked for Maxentius were not to be overlooked in Constantine's Rome. The vulnerability of the *Liber Pontificalis* to poor and sometimes mischievous editing has long been known (Holloway 2004, 108–9).

Elsewhere, new buildings began to rise on imperial property in or near to known Christian cemeteries on the Via Tiburtina (San Lorenzo fuori le Mura), Via Labicana (SS. Marcellino e Pietro) and Via Praenestina (Krautheimer 1937–77; Krautheimer 1986; Brandenburg 2005, 55–103; Curran 2000, 90–115; Holloway 2005, 86–115). A further basilica of the same distinctive design discovered on the Via Ardeatina in 1990 may yet be conclusively identified as Constantinian (*Liber Pontificalis* 35; Brandenburg 2005, 86–7). In and around the buildings themselves thousands of Christian dead were interred, giving the structures an unmistakable function as covered cemeteries (*coemeteria subteglata*). Several had large mausolea attached or close to the churches, as in the case of the Tor Pignattara on the imperial estate “ad duas lauros” on the Via Labicana and may have been designed for members of the imperial family (Brandenburg 2005, 56). The emperor himself may even have contemplated and made preparations for burial in one of these grand tombs before his imperial ambitions drew him east in 324 (Brandenburg 2005, 89–91; Holloway 2004, 86–7). At Santa Croce, abutting the Sessorian Palace, an existing hall was elaborately converted into a shrine, perhaps to house relics of the True Cross which Constantine's mother Helena had travelled to Palestine to recover (*Liber Pontificalis* 34; Brandenburg 2005, 103–8).

For the apostle Peter, c. 324, Constantine's architects designed an enormous new building, fully one-third larger than the Lateran church, and designed to encase within it a humble tomb (Liverani and Spinola 2010; Brandenburg 2005, 66–8; Holloway 2004, 120–55). The work was undertaken near the remains of a villa belonging to Nero, itself close by the circus of Gaius "Caligula." Constantine's project required the levelling of some 40,000 cubic meters of soil from the summit of the Vatican hill and the burial of hundreds of tombs, pagan and Christian, beneath the transept of the new church. By virtue of his continuing status as Pontifex Maximus of the Roman state, the proprieties of interfering with the resting places of so many dead could be assured. The resulting Constantinian basilica was preceded by a grand atrium and *quadriporticus* through which the faithful proceeded to a magnificently decorated interior focused on the tomb of the apostle (see Figure 27.2). An elaborate bronze canopy (*baldacchino*) was placed over the tomb and overhead, on the arch between nave and transept, emperor honored apostle: "Because with you as our leader the world rose to the stars, Constantine the victor in triumph founded this hall for you" (*ICUR* n.s. 2. 4092–5; Krauthheimer 1977, 258 fig. 226).

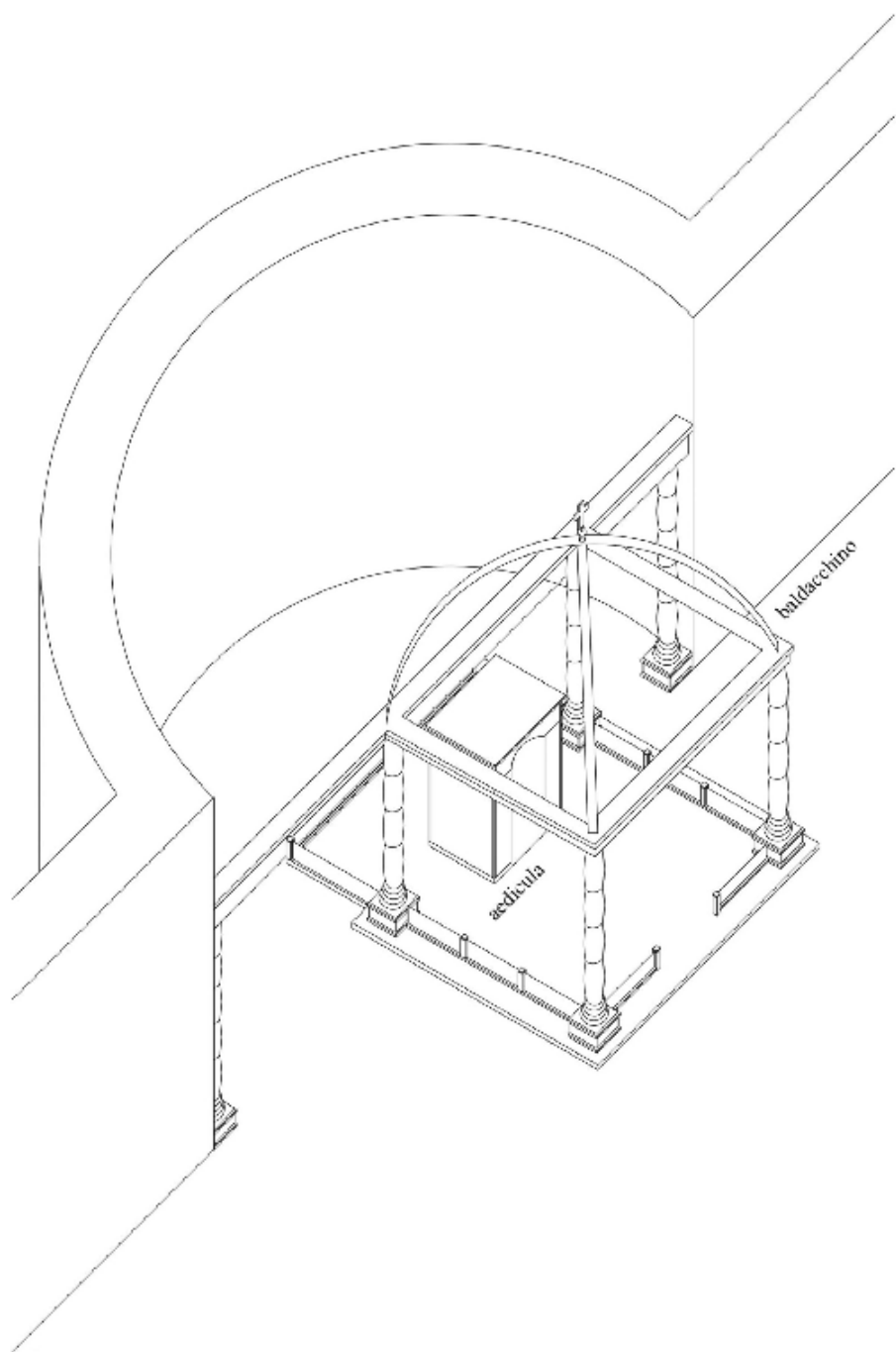


Figure 27.2 Detail of interior of Constantinian basilica of Saint Peter, Rome.

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Constantine's arrangements for the apostle Paul were more modest. The *Liber Pontificalis* attributes to Constantine the building of a "basilica" next to the

Via Ostiense but no evidence from the period suggests a structure on the scale of that built in honor of Peter. Remains beneath the great church built by Theodosius (c. 384–6) are those of a humble structure which Constantine did not apparently augment (Krautheimer 1977, 5. 97).⁴

But for all his labors there, Rome was not a city that Constantine came to love. After the victory over Maxentius he visited briefly only twice, in 315 and again in 326 (Barnes 1981, 68–76). The truth is that the inherent tensions between his developing Christian faith and his ancient responsibilities as the chief priest of Roman *religio* were at their most obvious when the emperor came to the ancient capital. And the realities of governing the empire required Constantine to live and rule in the East. Behind him, however, Constantine left a Christian community transformed by his intervention.

Conclusions

The history of the Roman church poses some stark methodological choices for the historian. But the substantial quantity and range of evidence surviving compels attention. And what is indisputable is that a remarkable story can be recovered. Over the course of fewer than three centuries, a community of Jewish Romans and associates meeting in small city rooms became a large, wealthy and cosmopolitan Church of Rome, accommodated in the largest venues for public worship in the Roman empire. But despite their overwhelming anonymity, the earliest Christians of Rome can clearly be sensed, communing with believers elsewhere, burying their dead and reaching out to the poor. Perceptions of a pure and unbroken single tradition linking Pope and apostle do not survive rigorous scrutiny, but a “monarchical” single bishop of the city did indeed emerge by middle of the second century, if not before. The development was testimony to the seriousness with which Christians reflected on the full implications of their own beliefs. They produced leaders who understood that the Church of Christ was still in the world and who exhibited both the courage, and the arts, to survive. But above all, the history of the Roman church is the history of a landscape. From the earliest times, locations in the city and its *suburbium* became fixed in the minds of believers as holy places. The Christians of Rome mapped out a sacred topography which even an emperor of their own could not ignore. In monumentalizing and subsidizing the places which had drawn the humblest Christian dead to them, Constantine created not just the most important symbols of Christian triumph but the resources to make Rome one of the most powerful implementers of it.

Guide to Further Reading

On all aspects of Rome's relations with the Jews, Goodman (2007) is an important work. For Paul, accessible studies include Murphy O'Connor (1996) and Crossan and Reed (2005). Meeks (2003) is excellent on the social context of the earliest Christians, and Lampe and Steinhauser (2003) is important on Rome, although methodologically somewhat controversial. On Christianity in Rome specifically, Green (2010) is an important recent treatment, and Pietri (1976) remains fundamental for the Constantinian and post-Constantinian period. Donfried and Richardson (1998) have essays on a number of important themes, while Brown and Meier (1983) and Jeffers (1991) explore tensions and conflicts within Christian communities. For Christian doctrine Hall (2005, 2006a, b) are important and Kelly (1977 and 1981) are excellent on creeds. On art and archaeology Snyder (2003) is admirably accessible and skeptical. On the Vatican grottoes, see now Liverani and Spinola (2010) while Toynbee and Ward Perkins (1956) is still an admirable model of lucidity. Elsner (1998) is important on art generally and the Christian catacombs are well served by some superior guides: Webb (2001), Rutgers (2000), Ficocchi Nicolai *et al.* (1999). On the early churches of Rome, Brandenburg (2005) is both excellent and lavishly illustrated while Krautheimer (1937–1977) remains the standard scholarly resource. Constantine in Rome is treated by Barnes (2011), Van Dam (2007), Holloway (2004) and Curran (2000). And on all aspects of early Christianity Harvey and Hunter (2008) is now a very important resource.

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ENDNOTES

1. 1 Clement 44. 4–5. See *Shepherd of Hermas* 9. 27. 1 (*episkopoi*); 2. 4. 2 (*presbyteroi*). Irenaeus thought the terms *diakonos* and *episkopos* equivalents: *Against Heresies* 3. 2. 2. Cf. Euseb. *Hist. Eccl.* 5. 24. 14. Hall 2006a, 416–17; Lampe 1989, 301–45, 398–9 characterized the structures as "fractionation." See now Green 2010, 92–9; Behr 2004, 65–6; Young, Ayres and Louth 2004, 65–6; Vinzent 2006, 404–5; Torjesen 2008.
2. For Paul as the guest of individual households see *Romans* 16: 14–15, 40; 17: 1–9; 18: 5–8. Cf. *Acts of Justin and Seven Companions* (ed. Musurillo), 3: "I have lived above the bath of Myrtinus son of Timiotinos... and I have known no other meeting place." For Paul's urban environment generally, see Meeks 2003, 9–50. For scepticism regarding the physical remains:

3. See Jerome, *Martyrology*: “June 29th: at Rome the anniversary of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, of Peter in the Vatican, Via Aurelia, of Paul on the Via Ostiensis, of both in the catacombs (‘ad catecumbas’), who suffered under Nero; consulship of Tuscus and Bassus [258 CE].” For the possibility of the translation of the remains at some stage, see the story in *LP* 22 (during the episcopate of Cornelius, 251–3 CE). The ‘Chronographer of 354’*s depositio martyrum* has: ‘Month of June, the 29th. Of Peter in the catacombs, of Paul at the Via Ostiensis, in the consulship of Tuscus and Bassus [258 CE].’ Holloway 2004, 154–5 has a useful summary of the various attempts to reconcile the accounts. See too Snyder 2003, 180–89, 251–8.
4. The much-publicized discovery of the “tomb of Saint Paul” beneath the modern church of San Paolo fuori le mura awaits full academic and scientific enquiry (Humphries 2008, 87–9).

CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT

Political Space

Elizabeth H. Pearson

This chapter will examine the role physical spaces played in a millennium of Roman politics and power, from the origins of the Republic in the sixth century BCE through to the establishment of the Tetrarchy in the third century CE. Rome's political spaces were not only shaped by the changing political realities of the city, but also had a role in shaping and directing these changes. A full treatment of this theme over such a timespan would require several volumes; this chapter will present only an overview. It will track the changes over the centuries by focusing on the oldest and most important political space in Rome, the Forum Romanum, whilst also examining other spaces and buildings which were of significance at different points in Rome's history.

The Republican Forum Romanum

As Rome was the heart of the empire, so the Forum Romanum was the heart of Rome. It was not the only forum in Rome, being bordered by the Forum Boarium and Forum Holitorium on the far side of the Capitol to the west, the Forum Piscatorium and Forum Cuppedinis to the east, and, later, the imperial fora of Caesar, Augustus, Nerva, and Trajan to the north and east. However, it is the oldest and most quintessentially Roman, as the nomenclature “Romanum” implies. While this specific title is not attested until Virgil (*Aen.* 8.361), Cicero was able to refer to the area as *forum populi Romani* (the forum of the Roman people) or even just “Forum,” indicating the primacy of the Forum Romanum above its associates and in the political life of the citizens (e.g. Cic. *Verr.* 2.1.58, *Fam.* 5.8.3).

The Forum lies in the basin between the Capitoline and Palatine hills, and was originally a marshy area. Paving, and efforts to drain the space, most famously with the sixth-century Cloaca Maxima (the city's great drain and sewer) (Liv. 1.56.2), demonstrate its early importance as a meeting-place and marketplace. The area received its first pavement, formed of crushed gravel on a levelled surface, in the seventh century BCE (Carafa 1998, 101–20; Coarelli 2007, 44). This pavement reveals the earliest clear signs of the area's political importance. As well as the Forum proper, a connected but separated area, the Comitium, was paved. Varro (*Ling.* 5.145, 155) distinguishes the two, with the Forum for decision-making and selling, and the Comitium for assembly

meetings and lawsuits. The archaeological evidence supports the Comitium as an assembly area from early in Rome's history. At the western side of the Comitium, near where the *lapis niger* (Black Stone) now lies, is an outcropping of cappellaccio tuff, the result of a landslide from the Capitoline. This rock originally stood well above the ground level of the Comitium area, and remained 0.5 meters above the gravel pavement. The outcrop formed a natural platform facing the Comitium, and may be the reason for locating Rome's earliest political assemblies there (Ammerman 1996, 134–5). Moreover, the pavement's date matches the Roman tradition for the establishment of the Comitium and the Curia Hostilia (senate house) by Tullius Hostilius in the late seventh century (Livy 1.30.2; Varro, *Ling.* 5.155).

The Comitium was the meeting place of three of the four popular assemblies for most of the Republic (cf. Taylor 1966, *passim*). The *comitia curiata* (curiate assembly) was formed of 30 *curiae* (groups), subdivisions of Romulus's original three Roman tribes. This ancient assembly's most important role was the passing of *leges curiata* (curiate laws) which granted senior magistrates *imperium* (military authority); it also dealt with inheritance matters. It is rarely mentioned in the sources, but was still meeting in 59 BCE when Clodius utilized it to be transferred from patrician to plebeian by adoption. (Suet. *Iul.* 20.4, *Tib.* 2.4). The *comitia tributa* (tribal assembly) and *concilium plebis* (meeting of the plebs) were both organized along tribal lines. These tribes were those traditionally ascribed to Servius Tullius's rearrangement of the assemblies, were based on geographical division, and after 241 BCE numbered 35 ([Livy] *Per.* 19.15). Both assemblies passed legislation and elected junior magistrates. Patricians were not part of the *concilium plebis*, and its laws (plebiscites) did not have force over them until the *Lex Hortensia* of 287 BCE (Gell. 15.27.5). The only assembly not to meet in the Comitium was the *comitia centuriata* (centuriate assembly) which elected senior magistrates; it met on the Campus Martius and will be discussed below.

All male adult citizens of Rome were eligible to vote in the assemblies, excepting patricians who were excluded from the *concilium plebis*. By the late third century BCE, male adult citizen numbers were approaching 300,000 ([Livy] *Per.* 20.15). It is evident from even a cursory glance at the Forum and Comitium that this number could not be accommodated in the space. Moreover, as Rome's influence expanded, citizens were living further and further from the city; it is extremely unlikely that the non-elite regularly attended the assemblies. What, then, was the number of citizens who could realistically have participated in the assemblies and so in the political life of Rome?

A study of this nature has several obstacles. Voting required multiple wooden *pontes* (bridges) but the number used and their size is unclear (e.g. Cic. *Leg.* 3.38). Voters crossed over the *pontes* to voice their vote to officials, and later,

with the introduction of the secret ballot in the 130s BCE, to cast it (Cic. *Leg.* 3.35–9). The arrangement of the voting groups around the *pontes* is also unknown. The Comitium's shape and size, and so capacity, is debated, although the often-portrayed circular shape is now considered incorrect (Russell 2016). Despite these problems, Mouritsen (2010, 19) has estimated that c. 3,600 men was the maximum capacity of the Comitium for voting, increasing to perhaps 4,000 for a *contio* (assembly meeting) without *pontes*. This is little more than 1 % of the third-century male citizen population, demonstrating how low citizen participation in politics was.

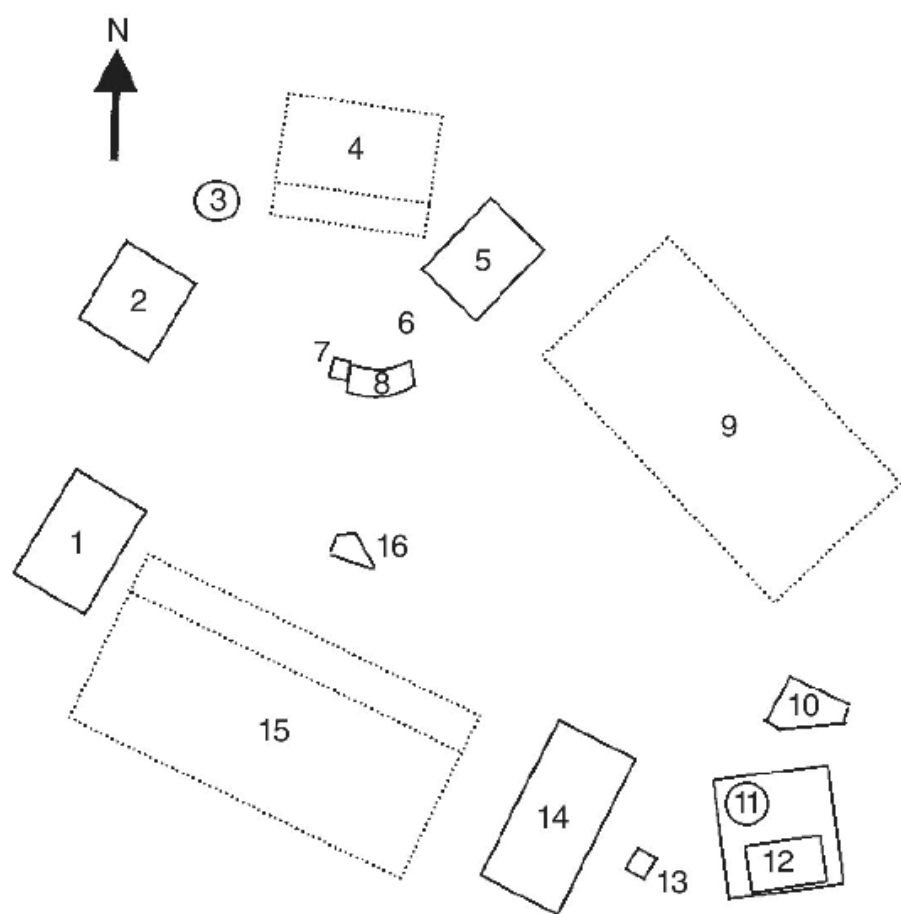
In 145 BCE, the tribune addressing the Comitium turned and spoke to the people assembled in the Forum (Cic. *Lael.* 96). The tribune was standing on the Rostra, a curved platform decorated since 338 BCE with ships' beaks (*rostra*) (Livy 8.14.12), which during the Republic stood between the Comitium and the Forum. While addressing the Comitium, the speaker faced the Curia Hostilia, which was across the Comitium. It has been suggested that the reason for moving *contiones* (assembly meetings) (and later assembly voting in 122 BCE (Plut. *C. Gracch.* 5.3)) was to allow a greater number to attend as Rome's population grew (most recently Russell 2016, 66). MacMullen (1980) estimated that 15,000–20,000 could fit in the area before the Temple of Castor and Pollux, the high podium of which was usually used to address assemblies in the Forum. (Taylor 1966, 25) suggests that the cluttered nature of the Forum near the Rostra resulted in the use of this podium instead for future *contiones*.) However, using estimates of time taken to vote, Mouritsen (2001, 23) has demonstrated that c. 3,000 voters remains a reasonable approximation even when the larger space of the Forum was used. It is political not logistical motives that are given for the tribunes moving the *comitia* away from the immediate vicinity of the senate.

Assessment of the Area Capitolina, calculated independently of Mouritsen and MacMullen, corresponds with these conclusions (Pearson 2016). The Area Capitolina was the enclosed sacred area around the Capitoline temple on the summit of the Capitoline hill. It was occasionally used for tribal assemblies, most notably that which led to Tiberius Gracchus's death (Plut. *Ti. Gracch.* 17.2–19.6). Allowing 0.25 square meters per person, approximately 24,000 could fit in the Area Capitolina within sight of the Capitoline temple's podium (cf. Still 2015, 27–64); allowing for statues, and the separation of the tribes and the *pontes* required for voting, perhaps c. 20,000. Certainly, c. 23,000 were able to disable voting procedures by sheer presence of numbers in 167 BCE to deny Aemilius Paulus a triumph, a throng which Livy describes as *tanta frequentia*, “such a great crowd” (Livy 45.36.6). As above, this indicates that having so many present at voting was highly unusual. The ability to nominate individuals to represent tribes with no members present underscores the low turnout at assemblies (Cic. *Sest.* 109). The political spaces of Rome reveal that participation in “popular” assemblies

was not, and was not expected to be, high.

However, it must be remembered that the Republican Forum was not a purely political space. Plautus's (*Curc.* 470–85) early second-century Forum is full of ordinary people going about their daily business; fish-sellers, butchers, bankers, and prostitutes all contribute to the overall impression of bustle and noise. It was in this environment that politics operated, and by influencing this environment that aristocrats attempted to build their own power. This development is demonstrated by a senatorial measure of 158 BCE removing from the Forum any statues not erected by senatorial decree (Plin. *HN* 34.30). The measure indicates senatorial control over the space, but also the power (or audacity) of the apparently numerous individuals who had taken it upon themselves to advertise their and their ancestors' achievements in the heart of Rome. That the Forum was a civic space as well as a political space made it an ideal advertising location (cf. Russell 2016, 43–79).

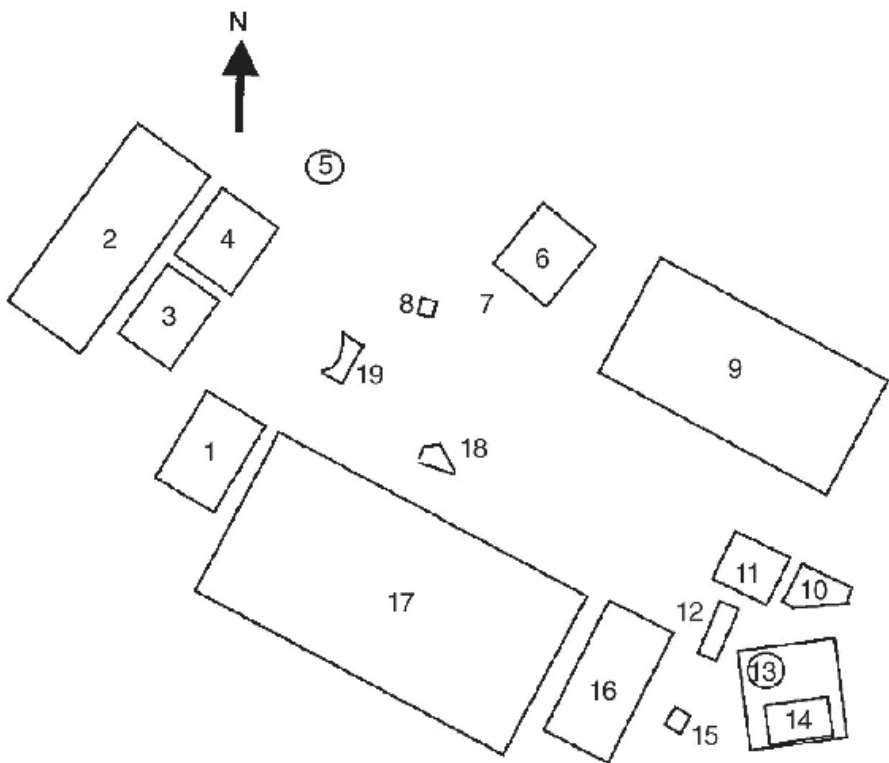
In part as a result of this self-promotion, the Republican Forum was also an increasingly monumentalized space. The number and scale of the building projects from the third to the first century BCE can be seen by comparing Figures 28.1 and 28.2. The Forum remained to some extent a marketplace throughout the Republic, but the retailers changed. In 179 BCE the Macellum, a purpose-built market hall north of the Forum, was rebuilt by the censors, moving many mercantile activities away from the Forum proper (Livy 40.51.5 cf. 27.11.16). The ban on butchers operating within the Forum had a significant sanitizing effect on its look and smell (Varro, *De vita pop. Rom.* 2fr.72). Only “respectable” bankers and luxury shops remained (Mouritsen 2001, 43). Moreover, the building and rebuilding of *basilicae* along the long edges of the Forum gradually incorporated the *tabernae* (shops or workshops) into the monumental fabric (e.g. Basilica Aemilia, Russell 2016, 77–9). The changes to the look and use of the Forum during the Republic changed the space into a more political, less multipurpose one.



- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Temple of Saturn | 9. <i>Atriae</i> and <i>tabernae</i> |
| 2. Temple of Concord | 10. Regia |
| 3. Carcer | 11. Temple of Vesta |
| 4. <i>Atriae</i> and <i>tabernae</i> | 12. House of the Vestals |
| 5. Curia Hostilia | 13. Lacus Iuturnae |
| 6. Comitium | 14. Temple of Castor and Pollux |
| 7. Lapis Niger | 15. <i>Atriae</i> and <i>tabernae</i> |
| 8. Rostra | 16. Lacus Curtius |

Figure 28.1 Sketch map of the Forum Romanum, early third century BCE (Elizabeth H. Pearson, after Russell 2016, xviii).

Source: Adapted from Russell 2016.



1. Temple of Saturn
2. 'Tabularium'
3. Basilica Opimia
4. Temple of Concord
5. Carcer
6. Curia Iulia
7. Comitium
8. Lapis Niger
9. Basilica Aemilia

10. Regia
11. Temple of Divus Iulius
12. Actian Arch of Augustus
13. Temple of Vesta
14. House of the Vestals
15. Lacus Iuturnae
16. Temple of Castor and Pollux
17. Basilica Iulia
18. Lacus Curtius
19. Rostra

Figure 28.2 Sketch map of the Forum Romanum, Augustan era (Elizabeth H. Pearson).

The Forum almost entirely ceased to be a residential area. Identifying earlier Republican buildings on the outskirts of the Forum is difficult, but several, known as *atriae*, appear to have at least originated as large dwellings (Russell 2016). Even in the early second century aristocratic houses were still a feature of the topography; Scipio Africanus's house was purchased by the censor of 169 BCE so that the site, along with those of several *tabernae*, could be used for the Basilica Sempronia (Livy 44.16.9–11). This is an illustrative example of the overarching trend running through the changes in the Republican Forum. Plautus's bustling city-center marketplace was increasingly, and quite

literally, marginalized, to be replaced with public buildings bearing the names and demonstrating the influence of prominent senatorial families. The Forum was slowly becoming a monumental showpiece, although it was not to complete this transformation for several centuries.

The Republican Campus Martius

The Campus Martius (Field of Mars) is a flat plain located in the bend of the Tiber north of the Capitoline hill. For the length of the Republic it remained outside the *pomerium*, Rome's sacred boundary. These geographical and topographical features dictated the use of the space. For both reasons, the Campus was the home of the one assembly which did not meet in the Comitium, the *comitia centuriata* (centuriate assembly). Traditionally, this assembly was the citizen body in military array. By the end of the third century BCE it was made up of 193 centuries grouped into seven classes: one equestrian and six infantry. Five of the infantry classes were made up of those eligible for military service and one, containing only one century, of the ineligible (*proletarii*). Membership of a century was dictated by wealth, with the poorer centuries containing many more voters than the richest; the last century may have contained 10,000. Voting began with the first class and proceeded until enough centuries had voted to attain a majority (Livy 1.42.4–43.13; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 4.16–21; cf. Taylor 1966). In practice, this meant voting rarely progressed past the second class of infantry, limiting political participation to the wealthiest sections of society. As the *comitia* was traditionally equivalent to the army, the prohibition against carrying arms within the *pomerium* prevented the *comitia centuriata* from meeting in the Comitium (Gell. 15.27.7). The open area of the early Campus provided ample space for the military array. By the third century BCE the assembly had ceased to resemble a martial muster, but still elected the senior magistrates who served as generals in Rome's wars. The fiction of the assembly as equivalent to the army limited the assembly to the Campus Martius.

The exact location of the assembly meetings during the Republic is unclear. Caesar was to begin constructing a permanent assembly structure on the Campus (see below), but, prior to this, temporary voting pens, *ovilia* (literally “sheep pens”), were erected when required (Cic. *Att.* 4.17.7). While it is probable that the *ovilia* were erected on the same site as Caesar's later building, this cannot be stated with any certainty (Platner and Ashby 1926, 373). The lack of topographical evidence means that no direct estimates or conclusions can be made about the level of participation in the Republican *comitia centuriata*.

At the southern edge of the Campus Martius at the foot of the Capitoline hill was an open patch of ground named the Circus Flaminius. It had very little similarity to a proper *circus* (cf. Varro, *Ling.* 5.154). It was built, or rather designated, by the censor C. Flaminius Nepos in 221 BCE, on an area that seems to have already borne the Flaminian name (Livy 3.54.15). Games were occasionally held there, such as temple dedication games in 179 BCE (Livy 40.52.4), but it more often had other, political, uses. Located right against but outside the *pomerium*, the Circus Flaminius remained physically close to the heart of Rome's political space and authority in the Forum, but had a tangible and crucial separation. Not coincidentally, it had a long association with plebeian politics, a consequence of the so-called "Struggle of the Orders." The *contio* which led to the overthrow of the *decemviri* in 449 BCE was given there, and the Circus Flaminius continued to be used for the *concilium plebis* (Livy 3.54.15, 27.21.1–2; Cic. *Att.* 1.14.1). It is also the probable location of Gaius Gracchus's election as tribune of the plebs on the Campus in 123 BCE (Plut. *C. Gracch* 3.1).

The proximity of the Circus Flaminius to the Forum attracted further political activity. Consuls, praetors and pro-magistrates awaiting a triumphal return into Rome could not cross the *pomerium* without losing their *imperium* and so right to triumph. Consequently, the exercise of their authority could draw political activity away from the Forum across the *pomerium* into the nearby Circus: they could address the *concilium* if it assembled there; and summon the senate to the Temple of Bellona which bordered it. The Circus was used as a staging ground for the triumph itself, with the spoils of victory displayed there prior to the procession (Livy 39.5.17; Plut. *Luc.* 37.2).

As a consequence of the different uses of the Circus Flaminius, it was, like the Forum Romanum, an area in which monumental display developed. Strabo (5.3.8) described the crowded space around the Circus Flaminius under Augustus, which Coarelli (2007, 267) has identified as including 15 Republican temples and porticoes with plebeian or victory origins. There is a noticeable increase in the first half of the second century BCE, to which seven foundations can be dated. This corresponds with Rome's military successes, and a similar growth in the Forum. Although it was not at the expense of preexisting day-to-day functions, the Circus Flaminius demonstrates the same increased monumentalization of public space by prominent individuals, and the same construction of grand public buildings in and around what had once been a more open area. On the Campus Martius, this process was to reach its zenith with Pompey's theater.

Theatrum Pompei

In the mid-first century BCE, following his triple triumph, Pompeius Magnus

(Pompey the Great) built a magnificent complex on the Campus Martius. It incorporated a theater, a temple to Venus Victrix, a large portico and *curia* (senate house), a garden, and his own house (Russell 2016, 153). The complex was monumental building on a scale as yet unknown in Rome, and a landmark moment in the development of political space. The complex as a whole was the first major privately funded building project on the Campus. Pompey gifted the theater, temple, and portico to the people, rendering them public space (Martial 2.14.10), but they retained his name and proximity to his private spaces, and with that a sense of ownership over the whole complex. This mix of patronage and public splendor was in itself nothing new; the Forum had been home to such displays for centuries. However, Pompey's complex was the self-promotion of the *basilicae* writ large and pushed to its extreme, blurring the lines of public and private space and finance in Pompey's favor.

Pompey's complex was not only the first such building on the Campus Martius, but also the first permanent theater in Rome (Tac. *Ann.* 14.10). Until this point, temporary wooden theaters, often themselves extravagant, were constructed as required. The conspicuous consumption brought acclaim to those associated with them just as monumental buildings did. Previous attempts to build permanent theaters were thwarted by the senate (e.g. [Livy] *Per.* 48), quite possibly in part due to the very acclaim Pompey was able to garner. The association of the theater with Greek democracy and free speech may also have played a role (Sear 2006, 56). Coarelli (2007, 283) suggests around 17,500 could attend the theater, not just for one but for repeated events under Pompey's patronage. That the theater, officially billed only as an elaborate staircase to the temple (Gell. 10.1.7), was dedicated (in 55 BCE) several years before the temple itself indicates the importance it had to Pompey as a political tool (Cic. *Fam.* 7.1.3).

However, the political authority rendered to Pompey by his complex is best demonstrated by the inclusion of a *curia*. The Curia Hostilia was destroyed in 52 BCE when it was used as a funeral pyre for the body of the infamous Clodius Pulcher, who was killed during civil unrest in the city (App. *B Civ.* 2.21). Pompey was to preside over the prosecution of Clodius's killer attended by an unprecedented (and technically illegal, see below) armed guard (Cic. *Mil.* 2). The destruction left the senate with no designated meeting place. Throughout the Republic the senate had met in various temples on specific occasions, but a single regular space was desirable. The Curia Pompeia provided this public space within a setting which Pompey could control like a householder, enhancing his authority (Russell 2016, 183). It also gave the senate no excuse for meeting without Pompey inside the *pomerium* where Pompey could not go without losing his *imperium*. Even after his death, it is possible to read his authority in the political activities which took place within his *curia*. Caesar was assassinated under Pompey's roof at the foot of

Pompey's statue, suggesting his implicit approval of the actions of the tyrannicides (Plut. *Caes.* 66.1–2). Pompey's influence, as demonstrated and enhanced by his complex, cast a long shadow.

It is possible to go even further than this. Plutarch (*Pomp.* 42.4) claims that Pompey was influenced by the theater in Mytilene in the construction of his complex. Russell (2016, 168–70) interprets this not as purely architectural inspiration (cf. Richardson 1992, 384), but as the Hellenistic model of demonstrating and projecting authority. In building his complex on the public space of the Campus Martius outside the *pomerium*, Pompey created an alternative seat of political power. The dome of Pompey's temple reached the height of the temples on the Capitoline (Gros 1987, 324), while his complex contained spaces for the senate and ordinary people to partake of activities more often located in the Forum Romanum. He created an “anti-Forum” with its own rival Capitoline, all under the name Pompeius. This flamboyant illustration of personal authority and control of political space would not be matched until the building of the imperial fora.

Julius Caesar's Building Project

Caesar planned to carry out, and began, a series of monumental building projects during his dictatorship. Concurrent with the trend of monumental self-promotion which had developed during the Republic, these projects aimed to stamp Caesar's authority on the topography of Rome. The projects included: the first of the imperial fora an extension to the Forum Romanum designed to rival Pompey's complex on the Campus Martius; and a permanent voting structure on the Campus Martius. The *Saepta Iulia* and *Diribitorium* (Julian voting area and counting house) were designed to replace the temporary *ovilia* with a dedicated assembly space for the *comitia centuriata* (Cic. *Att.* 4.17.7). As with previous monumental building, this was to be a gift to the people which retained the connotations of ownership through its nomenclature. The building carried a careful political message, ostensibly indicating the continuing importance of the assemblies but commissioned by an unprecedented dictator in perpetuity.

When the *Saepta* was eventually completed and dedicated by Agrippa in 26 BCE (Cass. Dio 53.23.1), it was formed of a huge rectangular unroofed area orientated north–south and lined with porticoes; the counting house stood at the southern end. The physical relationship of the temporary *ovilia* to the *Saepta* is hypothetical, but it is likely that the overall shape was maintained (Mouritsen 2001, 27). Whether or not it stood in the same area as the *ovilia*, the *Saepta* was certainly larger and grander than its “sheep pens” predecessor. Its size (310 × 120 meters, longer but not wider than Pompey's complex) would have rendered it a visually impressive structure despite the increased

building activity on the once-open Campus Martius.

Using the Saepta Iulia it is possible to estimate the expected turnout at the *comitia centuriata*. The yearly consular elections in July probably had the highest attendance; they, unlike legislative gatherings, had a set date in the year and were often presaged by games. If citizens who lived some distance from Rome made only one trip to the city a year, this period is a good candidate (Taylor 1966, 68). Various estimates for the Saepta's capacity have been made. Taylor's (1966, 113) 70,000 has been revised by MacMullen (1980, 454) to 55,000 and further by Mouritsen (2001, 27–30) to a maximum of 30,000. On practical grounds Mouritsen would lower this figure further due to overcrowding, but does not take into account modern crowd science findings which do not require this (cf. Still 2014, 27–64). He does, however, suggest, using Cicero (*Fam.* 7.30), that *c.* 6,000 voted in the first two classes in the consular election of 45 BCE, indicating that little more than 3 % of the eligible population were present at the elective assemblies of the *comitia centuriata* ([Livy] *Per.* 98.3). The voting process of the *centuriata* (see above) limited further those who, when present, would then be required to participate. Although numbers at the *centuriata* were probably higher than the other assemblies, in relative terms they remained low.

The open space within the Saepta Iulia made it an attractive venue for public entertainment, itself another form of political interaction. Several emperors displayed gladiators and even naval battles there (Suet. *Aug.* 43, *Calig.* 18, *Claud.* 21; Cass. Dio 55.10.7, 59.10.5). Pliny (*HN* 36.29) records the space being used as an art gallery. Nevertheless, Augustus had intended that the Saepta would primarily be used as a voting precinct (Cass. Dio 53.23.1–2). However, when Tiberius transferred the elections to the Senate, leaving the *centuriata* with no role other than to approve their decision, the power of the *comitia* was effectively lost (Tac. *Ann.* 1.15). The open space continued to host entertainment and markets (Holleran 2012, 249–52), but politically the Saepta Iulia became a sacrifice to, monument of, and venue for the largely one-way, top-down political communication and ostentation of the imperial period.

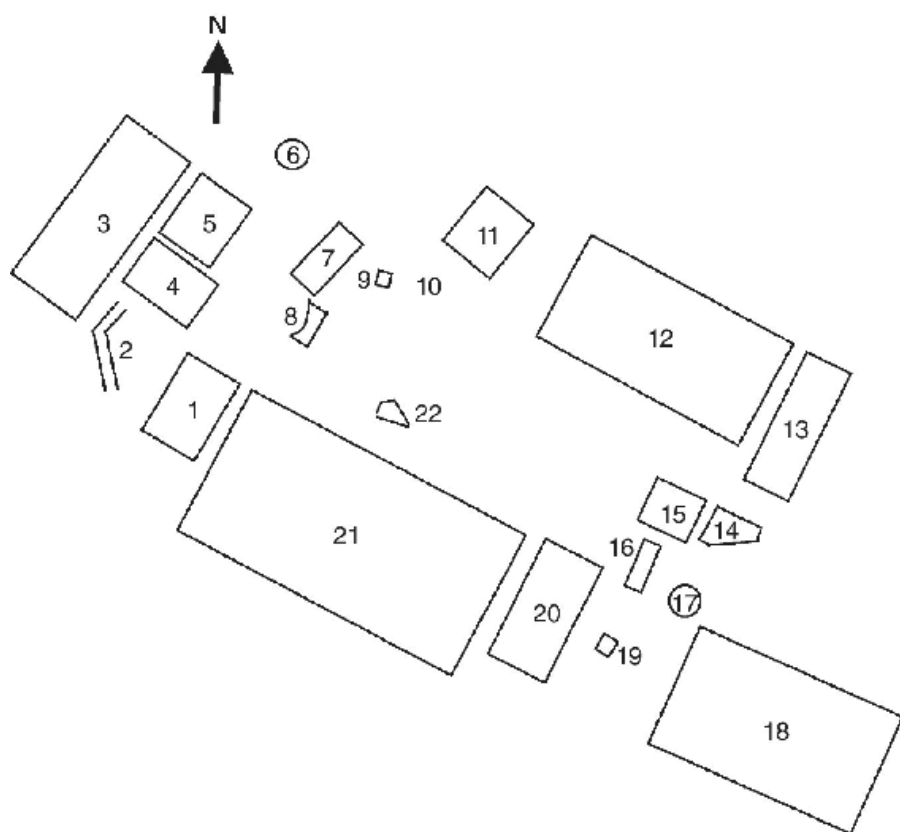
Augustus and Imperial Power

Augustus famously declared that he found Rome built of brick and left it clad in marble (Suet. *Aug.* 29.1). This renovating approach to architecture also reflects Augustus's treatment of the Forum Romanum during his reign. By the end of the Republic the Forum had filled with monumental buildings built, maintained and updated by the prominent men of the previous centuries. The Capitoline had been remodeled following a fire in 83 BCE (App. *B Civ.* 1.83), and the so-called "Tabularium" now formed an impressive backdrop to the

north-western end of the Forum. Augustus's work in the Forum was largely limited to the renovation and rededication of the existing monumental architecture. He rebuilt and rededicated the Basilica Iulia, which replaced the Basilica Sempronia on the south-western edge, and undertook repairs on several temples (*Res Gestae* 19–20). He remodeled the rostra, which Caesar had moved from the edge of the Comitium to a new location at the north-west end of the Forum. The only major addition was the foundation of the temple to Divus Iulius (Divine Julius), constructed with a prominent speakers' podium at the south-eastern end of the Forum facing the new location of the Rostra. (see 11 and 19 on [Figure 28.2](#)).

By treating the Forum in this way, Augustus demonstrated his regard for its past history, in keeping with his stated aim of restoring the Republic (*Res Gestae* 1). However, the temple and newly located Rostra created a new axis, demonstrating Augustus's mastery of the Forum, and by extension both the state and history which it embodied. The marble cladding crystalized the Forum as a monument to Rome's past. The final vestiges of Plautus's Forum were purged by the decree preventing anyone from lingering in the Forum if they were not wearing a toga (Suet. *Aug.* 40.5). This redefined the Forum as a purely political space in which even the movement and dress of individuals was controlled. Augustus's changes transformed the Forum from an area for the exercise of power by SPQR into a physical manifestation of his monarchical Principate, cloaked in the guise of a "restored" *res publica*.

Given the importance of the Forum Romanum as both a Republican and imperial showground, surprisingly few new buildings were added during the Principate. Following Augustus's work, the only major additions before Diocletian were temples to Divus Vespasianus (Divine Vespasian) and Antoninus et Faustina (Divine Antoninus Pius and Divine Faustina), the Arch of Septimius Severus and the Portico of the Dei Consentes (Consent of the Gods) (compare [Figures 28.2](#) and [28.3](#)). Even these buildings were intended to complement the Forum without modifying it (Coarelli 2007, 47). The temples reflect the continuing use of the Forum for public (and thus political) funerals, while the arch continued Republican triumphal traditions and the portico the consistent divine favor enjoyed by Rome. Transforming the Forum as a whole into a monument had prevented future emperors from altering its balance. By the same token, this balance was an important one which could not easily be upset while the emperor continued to be only *princeps* (first citizen), not *dominus* (master).



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|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Temple of Saturn | 12. Basilica Aemilia |
| 2. Portico of the Dii Consentes | 13. Temple of Antoninus and Faustina |
| 3. 'Tabularium' | 14. Regia |
| 4. Temple of Divus Vespasianus | 15. Temple of Divus Iulius |
| 5. Temple of Concord | 16. Actian Arch of Augustus |
| 6. Carcer | 17. Temple of Vesta |
| 7. Arch of Septimius Severus | 18. House of the Vestals |
| 8. Rostra | 19. Lacus Iuturnae |
| 9. Lapis Niger | 20. Temple of Castor and Pollux |
| 10. Comitium | 21. Basilica Iulia |
| 11. Curia Iulia | 22. Lacus Curtius |

Figure 28.3 Sketch map of the Forum Romanum, late third century CE (Elizabeth H. Pearson).

Successive emperors were able to fully project their power on the city by building their own fora bordering the original: the Forums of Julius Caesar, Augustus, Nerva (also known as the Forum Transitorium) and Trajan. Proximity to the Forum Romanum remained important; part of the saddle between the Capitoline and Quirinal hills was removed to accommodate Trajan's Forum (Cass. Dio 68.16.3). The influence of the Forum Romanum on the definition of the political space of the imperial fora is unmistakable. The imperial fora consisted of an open square bordered on three sides by porticos

and on the fourth by a major temple (or basilica in Trajan's Forum), echoing the design of the Forum Romanum. Likewise, the imperial fora maintained a political role for the social elite. The spaces had a practical role in providing extra space for the traditional political and legal functions of the Forum Romanum (Suet. *Aug.* 29.1), as emphasized by the choice of basilica rather than temple as the focal point of Trajan's Forum. (For the legal functions in the fora see Bablitz, [Chapter 26](#) in this volume.) Honorary statues were displayed in both custom-built niches and the open area. As under the Republic, these honored senators and generals worthy of triumphal honors (although only emperors could now celebrate a triumph proper, cf. *Fasti Triumphales*), with the addition of honors rendered to the emperor by cities of the empire.

Unlike the Forum Romanum, the new fora did not evolve, but were spaces orchestrated by imperial power from their inception. Thus alongside the continuations of aristocratic competition, the imperial fora also served as set-piece propaganda legitimizing imperial rule. The Julian and Augustan fora in particular emphasized the rulers' link to mythical and divine ancestors, Aeneas and Venus, presenting imperial power as the natural consequence of Rome's development from its very beginning. Planning the imperial fora from scratch allowed the emperors much greater control over the use and presentation of the space. Carefully designed entrances limited and controlled movement into and through them; the imperial fora were destinations, not the crossroads across the city through which the Forum Romanum developed. They inscribed power on the space of the city through the design of inaccessibility in ostensibly public places (Newsome [2011](#)). Fora were no longer the bustling, noisy, meeting and shopping places for all citizens to interact in on a daily basis. Architecture and topography now dictated imperial power to citizens in choreographed surroundings.

Alternative Political Spaces: The *Domus Aurea* and Its Aftermath

Nero stamped his authority on the landscape of Rome in a different way. Imperial palaces, like Augustus's house on the Palatine, had developed from existing domestic spaces to become seats of imperial power. Nero took a new approach. He appropriated the land ravaged by the fire of 64 CE and began the construction of his Domus Aurea (Golden House) (Suet. *Nero* 31). This complex filled the expanse between the Palatine, Esquiline, and Caelian hills, completely transforming the valley. It was a blatant intrusion of his power into the space of the city, turning land previously owned and occupied by ordinary citizens into his own pleasure palace. Other emperors did build large private residences; Hadrian's 300 acre villa and grounds at Tivoli are a good

example (SHA, *Hadr.* 26.5). However, Hadrian built outside Rome, avoiding the smack of autocracy attached to Nero's foundation. Even if Champlin (2003, 206–7) is right to conclude that Nero intended the Domus Aurea to be a largely public space, Nero's power meant that he could and did substantially and unsightly alter land usage in Rome.

Nero's Domus Aurea was never completed. Following his suicide and the subsequent civil wars, the Flavians worked to demolish the complex. This work included returning large tracts of the land to public use, in the form of buildings such as the Baths of Titus (probably the repurposed private baths of Nero) and famous Amphitheatrum Flavium (the Colosseum) with associated support buildings. The return of this land to public use served several purposes for the Flavian emperors. As with the other public buildings discussed, the association of individuals through nomenclature conveyed connotations of ownership and patronage. The apparent generosity of the public gifts served the same purpose for the Flavians as it had for Pompey and aristocrats before him, cloaking their political power in a public beneficence which simultaneously enhanced it. Additionally, it was necessary to curry favor with Rome's plebs. Despite his excesses, Nero had been popular. He often gave entertainments to the people, and they dressed his grave with flowers (Suet. *Nero* 11–12, 57). The creation of Rome's largest amphitheater at what had been the heart of the Domus Aurea demonstrated that the Flavians would continue to court the plebs.

This reveals an alternative operation of political power in imperial Rome. The Colosseum was dedicated by Titus in 80 CE with 100 days of games (Suet. *Titus* 7). The need to court the plebs through its creation demonstrates that they maintained a political role, as Juvenal's "bread and circuses" quip underlines (*Sat.* 10.81). The power of the people was much diminished from the height of the Republic, but was nonetheless still present. Theaters and amphitheaters were not just venues for entertainment, but also spaces in which the people could interact with the emperor and express public opinion. Theatergoers harangued Tiberius over the price of grain (Tac. *Ann.* 6.13) and Caligula prevented a riot over taxation only by force (Jos. *AJ* 19.24–7). The theater as a popular political space may have its beginnings in those of the theater itself. Golvin (1988, 298–313) suggests that the unusual shape of the amphitheater is a consequence of the temporary structures built for games around the edges of the Forum Romanum during the Republic. If the amphitheater represents the Forum, the original political space of the Republic, it is perhaps unsurprising that the one remaining major gathering of Rome's people retained elements, however diluted, of this political character.

Moreover, this political communication could involve many more people than the traditional assemblies. Estimates place the capacity of the completed Colosseum at 50,000 (Rose 2005, 118, Coarelli 2007, 167). This was only 5 % of Rome's million-strong population, suggesting exclusion not inclusion

(Holleran 2003), but is nonetheless significantly more than ever appear to have participated in the popular assemblies. Further, the amphitheater represented a greater cross-section of society, including women, children, and even slaves (cf. Rose 2005). Seating arrangements within Roman theaters had long reflected social status by law, with senators at the front and the lowest classes furthest from the action (Livy 34.44.5). Nevertheless, members of all sections of society were present and thus involved in the political communication. In a period in which architecture was dominated by the top-down dictation of political power by the emperor and the elite, public entertainment venues such as the Colosseum provided a small but significant counterpoint in Rome's topography.

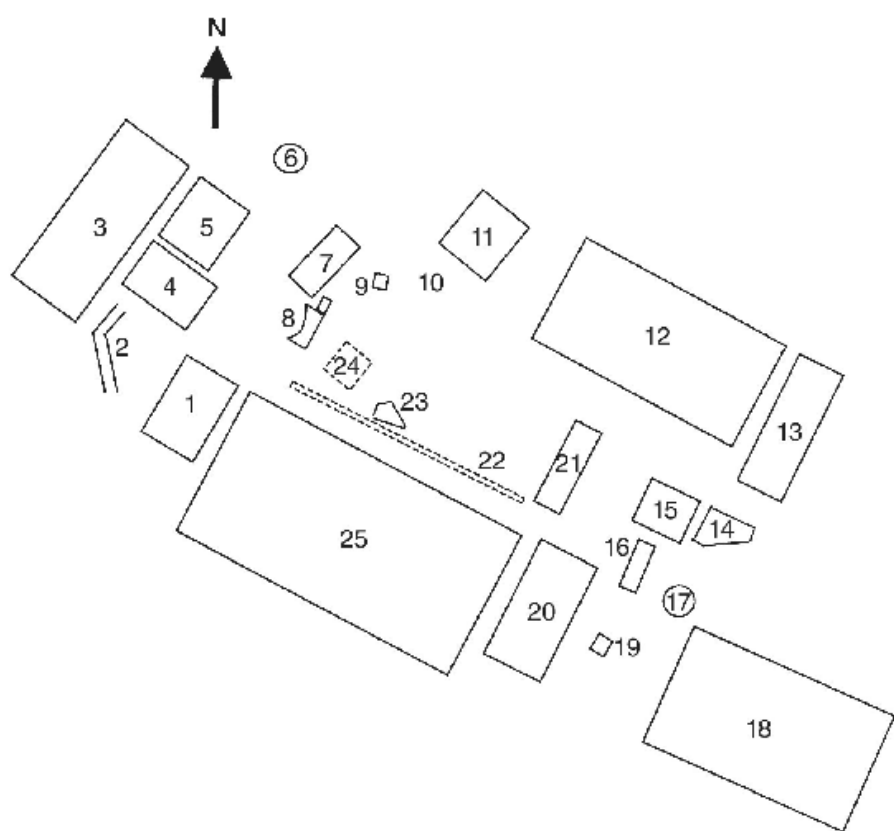
Diocletian, Tetrarchy, and the Forum Romanum

Following the third-century crisis, Roman political power became increasingly disassociated from Rome the city. Emperors spent their time on the fringes of the empire, and were not of senatorial or Roman origin. Herodian (1.6.5) addressed the statement "Rome is wherever the emperor is" to Commodus, but it better reflects third-century attitudes to the exercise of imperial authority (Grig and Kelly 2012b, 6). The extent of this disconnection is exemplified by Constantius II. It is as a consequence of his visit in 357 CE that Ammianus Marcellinus (16.10) wrote the best surviving description of Late Antique Rome. This was Constantius's sole visit to Rome, totaling only one month from his 24 year reign as Augustus. Rome's reign as the empire's seat of power had ended.

However, the city had not entirely ceased to have a political function. The Forum Romanum in particular continued to operate as an important monument to Rome's history, just as it had for Augustus centuries earlier. Ammianus's description focuses on the early imperial, setting Constantius's reign in the context of the glory days of high empire (Grig 2012, 33), again just as Augustus had harked back to the Republic for continuity. When Diocletian and Maximian established the Tetrarchy in 285 CE, it was the Forum which was to play host to the architectural demonstration of their newly established stability.

Diocletian initiated the first redevelopment of the Forum Romanum since Augustus had created a new axis (see Figure 28.4). The fire of 284 CE, which damaged the Senate House and Basilica Iulia (*Chron.* 354), gave Diocletian a pretext to work on the Forum, just as had Augustus's repair work. As with Augustus, the structural changes were minimal, but the resulting redefinition of the space was not. Augustus's axis was developed: a new *rostra* was constructed in front of the temple to Divus Iulius, effectively shortening the Forum, and the Augustan Rostra was lengthened to balance and mirror it (see

Figure 28.4). Five columns were erected on both Rostra, topped by statues depicting the two senior Augusti and two junior Caesares emperors and a divine figure (probably Jupiter at the western end and Hercules at the eastern) (Kalas 2015, 31–3). Representing rulership qualities rather than specific emperors, the statues demonstrated the power, stability and balance of the new Tetrarchic system (Kalas 2015, 25–6). The seven columns lining the south-western edge of the Forum and the column of Phocas do not fit the balance of Diocletian's Forum. They should perhaps be dated to the reign of Constantine (Kalas 2015, 43).



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| 1. Temple of Saturn | 14. Regia |
| 2. Portico of the Dii Consentes | 15. Temple of Divus Iulius |
| 3. 'Tabularium' | 16. Actian Arch of Augustus |
| 4. Temple of Divus Vespasianus | 17. Temple of Vesta |
| 5. Temple of Concord | 18. House of the Vestals |
| 6. Carcer | 19. Lacus Iuturnae |
| 7. Arch of Septimius Severus | 20. Temple of Castor and Pollux |
| 8. Rostra with extension | 21. New Rostra |
| 9. Lapis Niger | 22. Late Antique columns |
| 10. Comitium | 23. Lacus Curtius |
| 11. Curia Iulia | 24. Column of Phocas |
| 12. Basilica Aemilia | 25. Basilica Iulia |
| 13. Temple of Antoninus and Faustina | |

Figure 28.4 Sketch map of the Forum Romanum, early fourth century CE (Elizabeth H. Pearson).

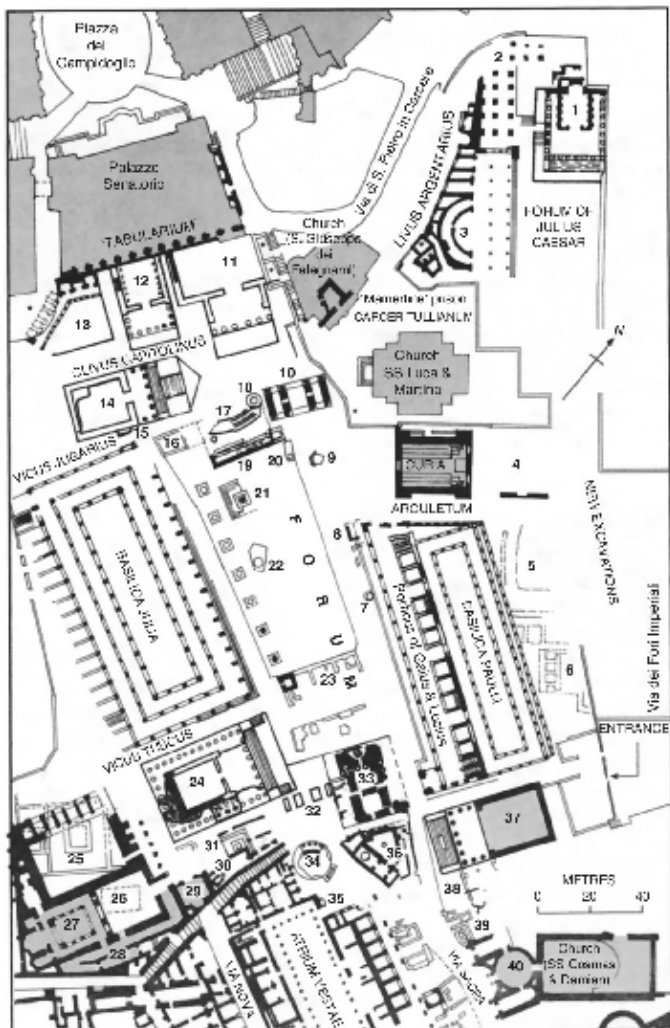
Diocletian's Forum Romanum was now even more of a showpiece than it had been for Augustus. The symbolism of the four emperors permanently and quite literally above the hemmed-in audience is difficult to miss. The Forum was "activated" for the 20-year anniversary of the Tetrarchy in 303 CE, the only secure instance of Diocletian visiting Rome (Lactant. *De mort pers.* 17.1–2). The architecture's communication of the new political reality was

not, however, entirely successful. Diocletian was upset by the free speech of Rome's plebs. The expectation of some level of two-way political communication was retained by the city's people despite the transformation of its heart into a carefully choreographed monumental showpiece of imperial history and Dominate rule.

The influence of political space in Rome on the expression and form of power did not end even when the capital was transferred to Constantinople. Much of the new capital's monumental building was consciously modeled on Rome; Rome demarcated the aesthetics of political space (Ward-Perkins 2012). Throughout its evolution, Rome's topography defined and reflected the changing political circumstances of the exercise of power. Over a thousand years the Forum Romanum went from a marketplace and assembly place of a small citizen-run city-state to an intricately controlled monument to power at the heart of an autocratic Mediterranean empire. The story is one of the growth of the power of the individual, but tempered by important nuances. Rome's development as a city and as a power complement one another; it is only by examining the two in tandem that either can be fully understood.

Guide to Further Reading

Scott (2013) provides a general introduction to issues of space in the ancient world, while Laurence and Newsome's (2011) volume addresses space in Roman cities. For the buildings and architecture of Rome, the topographical dictionaries of Platner and Ashby (1926) and Richardson (1992) are invaluable, as is the more in-depth multilingual Steinby (1993–2000). Coulston and Dodge (2000), Coarelli (2007) and Claridge (2010) are good archaeological overviews of the city of Rome and should be supplemented by Coarelli's (1983–5, 1997) detailed works in Italian on the Forum Romanum and the Campus Martius. The interaction of politics and space across the whole city are addressed for the later Republic and Late Antiquity respectively by Russell (2016) and Grig and Kelly (2012a). On the Forum Romanum in particular, see Purcell's two Forum Romanum articles in Steinby (1995) for the Republic and Early empire and Kalas (2015) for Late Antiquity. For political assemblies Taylor (1966) remains a key work, but must be read with the more recent Mouritsen (2001). Golvin's (1988) French work on amphitheaters can be more readily accessed through Welch's (1991) comprehensive review.



Key:

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| 1 Temple of Venus Genetrix | 21 Column of Phocas |
| 2 'Basilica Atrientia' | 22 Lacus of Curtius |
| 3 Large public latrine | 23 Rostra (late Imperial) |
| 4 Chalcedium of Forum of Caesar | 24 Temple of Castor |
| 5 South end of Forum of Nerva (Transitorium) | 25 Domitianic Hall/Vestibulus |
| 6 Part of Temple of Peace | 26 Forecourt (S. Maria Antiqua) |
| 7 Shrine of Venus Cloacina | 27 Atrium (S. Maria Antiqua) |
| 8 Arch of Janus (?) | 28 Covered ramp to Palatine |
| 9 Black Stone (Ipsa Nigra) | 29 Oratory of the 40 Martyrs |
| 10 Arch of Septimius Severus | 30 Hors Julienne |
| 11 Temple of Concordia Augusta | 31 Lacus Iulianus |
| 12 Temple of Vespasian and Titus | 32 Arch of Augustus |
| 13 Portico of the Dei Consentes | 33 Temple of Divus Iulius |
| 14 Temple of Saturn | 34 Temple of Vesta |
| 15 Arch of Tiberius (?) | 35 Shrine |
| 16 Lacus Servilius (?) | 36 Hagia |
| 17 Rosas (Julian) | 37 Temple of Antoninus & Faustina |
| 18 Umbilicus Urbis | 38 Ancient burial ground |
| 19 Rostra (Augustan) | 39 Basement of Late Republican house |
| 20 Decennaria column base | 40 'Temple of Divus Romulus' |

Map 14 Roman Forum. General site plan. (Drawn by Amanda Claridge).

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PART IX

THE ROMAN TRIUMPH

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE

The Triumphal Procession

Geoffrey S. Sumi

Introduction

Rome was a processional city, a ceremonial city – a city of spectacle. Many of the festivals on its calendar included circus games (*ludi circenses*) that began with a procession of the magistrates dressed in finery, charioteers and horses, and couches (*pulvinaria*) displaying images of the gods, which set off from the Capitoline hill and wound its way through the symbolic center of the city, the Forum Romanum, to the Circus Maximus where cheering throngs greeted its arrival. Rome's most prominent citizens were honored with public funerals whose cortège of relatives, friends, slaves, freedmen, and actors wearing the masks (*imagines*) of the deceased's famous ancestors, escorted the body of the deceased from the atrium of his home to the Forum where a relative detailed the family history and career of the deceased in a laudatory address (*laudatio*) delivered from the speaker's platform (Rostra) (see esp. Polyb. 6.53–54; Flower 1996; Price 1987).

Most spectacular of all was the Roman triumph, awarded to celebrate an important military victory and welcome home the returning general and troops. It was a magnificent display of Roman martial power, the glory of war, and the splendid rewards for victory. In a triumphal procession crowds lined the streets and stood on temple steps to cheer the victorious general resplendent in crimson and gold, standing tall in his chariot, holding an ivory scepter, his face painted red; the city dignitaries preceded him, as did the most distinguished prisoners of war; spoils were conveyed in ox-drawn carts; and depictions of the war recently won were on display. Roman generals in the Republic (509–31 BCE) were known to wait months or even years for the coveted honor of a triumph. In this period, triumphs were awarded by decree of the senate and vote of the people. Triumphal debates in the senate were often arenas of sharp political conflict, where political careers and family distinction were at stake (Pittenger 2008; cf. Auliard 2001). The emperor Augustus introduced the most significant change in the history of the triumph when he reserved it for members of his immediate family, thus transforming this spectacle of the Roman Republic into imperial court ceremonial.

The history of the triumph was interwoven with the history of the city itself. An inscriptional archive, the so-called *Fasti triumphales*, recorded all triumphs and other victory celebrations (*ovationes*, naval triumphs, and

triumphs on the Alban Mount) starting from the traditional date of Rome's founding (753 BCE) – naming Romulus, Rome's founder as also its first triumphing general – to the last "Republican" triumph (by Lucius Cornelius Balbus in 19 BCE) after which the ceremony became the prerogative of the emperor (Degraffi 1947, part 1; Beard 2007, 61–6). In this 735-year period, there were approximately 279 triumphs, just over one every three years (for a list see Itgenshorst 2005, 262–71). If we focus exclusively on a more historical period, beginning from the time of the First Punic War (264 BCE) and ending with the last senatorial triumph (19 BCE), the number of triumphs increases to one every eighteen months. A Roman born in 220 BCE and who lived to 60 would have been able to regale younger contemporaries with tales of about 31 triumphs he had witnessed. These figures, however, especially the averages, belie the unevenness in the history of the triumph. Our hypothetical Roman would have seen four triumphs in the year 175 BCE alone but not another until Lucius Aemilius Paullus's triumph over the Macedonian king Perseus eight years later (in 167 BCE). Triumphs were frequent enough in this period that spectators were probably able to remember the last one – or last several – that they attended, and therefore were likely to be drawn to a triumph that promised something rare or unprecedented, a victory over a distinguished enemy – one known for its military prowess or its long and prestigious history – or spoils, captives, and scenes of battle from far distant lands. There is likely to have been tremendous pressure, then, on triumphing generals in this period to indulge the spectators' desires for the new, the rare, and the exotic.

In the imperial period triumphs became much rarer. In the 87 years from the last "Republican" triumph, to the death of the emperor Nero, there are only four securely attested triumphs: Tiberius in 7 BCE and 12 CE, Germanicus in 17 CE, and the emperor Claudius in 44 CE. Therefore, the triumph of Vespasian and Titus in 71 CE, which not only celebrated their victory in the Jewish war but also marked the beginning of the new Flavian dynasty, was the first in nearly a generation. Other celebrations, including the emperor's birthday as well as his arrival in the city, borrowed elements of the triumph (on the *adventus* in particular, see Lehnen 1997; MacCormack 1972). The triumph of Vespasian and Titus, as became typical in the imperial period, celebrated the martial success (*gloria*) of the emperor and his family and offered a clear strategy for dynastic succession (Balbuza 2002 and 2004).

The triumphal procession paraded through the streets of Rome barbarian captives, representations of conquered cities, peoples, rivers, and mountains – a striking vision of the world that Rome had conquered. The triumph had a historical dimension as well. The route of the triumph, inasmuch as we can determine it, often retraced the same path that previous triumphing generals had taken past important monuments; the triumphing general implicitly and at times explicitly was compared to famous generals of the past who had

triumphed. In some cases, the triumphal procession contained spoils or other artifacts alluding to figures from the past. Finally, the triumphing general in his chariot took on the appearance of king or god, a striking masquerade that was anathema to the spirit of Republican government. In other words, the triumphal procession created an otherworldly visual experience for the spectators, in which they saw the foreign, the exotic, and the mythical, parade before their eyes.

The Route of the Triumphal Procession

Despite the importance of the triumph throughout Roman history, no single source describes the route in any detail and only a few mention significant landmarks along the way. The uncertainties have given rise to considerable debate over the existence of a fixed route (e.g. Makin 1921; Coarelli 1968; Beard 2007, 92–105; Bastien 2007, 316–24) as well as the possibility that it could have changed over time in response to the changing topography of the city, or that the triumphing general was allowed to alter his route for his particular triumph (Favro 1994).

Two roughly contemporary sources, Josephus, an eyewitness to the Flavian triumph (71 CE), and Plutarch, recording the much earlier triumph of Lucius Aemilius Paullus in 167 BCE, inform us about the starting point of the procession: Josephus states that Vespasian and Titus spent the night before their triumph in the Temple of Isis (on the Campus Martius) and then proceeded at dawn to the Porticus Octavia, beside the Circus Flaminius, where they met the senate, chief magistrates, and members of the equestrian order, and received the acclamations of the troops. Vespasian then recited prayers and dismissed the troops to their customary breakfast in advance of the triumph proper. Vespasian and Titus then proceeded to the Porta Triumphalis, the triumphal gateway to the city, the location of which is hotly disputed (principal ancient sources are Cic. *Pis.* 55; Suet. *Aug.* 100. Cf. *LTUR* 3.333–4 and Versnel 1970, 132–63). There they put on their triumphal robes, performed a sacrifice and launched the procession which moved through the theaters (presumably those of Pompey, Balbus, and Marcellus) to give the people gathered there a good view (Joseph. *BJ* 7.123–9). Plutarch (*Aem.* 32.2) seems to place the starting point of the triumphal procession around the same location, for he says the people first decorated and then crowded into the “equestrian theaters” (he must mean the Circus Flaminius and Circus Maximus; none of the theaters mentioned above had yet been built) as well as the Forum to watch the procession. Moreover, the eleven victory-temples surrounding the Circus Flaminius attest to its importance for the triumphal procession (Claridge 2010, 250–51; see also Favro’s contribution, [Chapter 30](#) in this volume). The Campus Martius was the traditional mustering place of

the Roman army and the location of the Villa Publica and the Saepta Julia, the voting enclosure of the Roman people, although in the late Republic and early empire much of it had been built over with theaters, temples, and baths. Moreover, since it was outside the sacred boundary of the city (the *pomerium*), which a general with *imperium* was not allowed to cross, the general could remain here awaiting word of his triumph. The Campus Martius, therefore, was an appropriate starting point of the triumph.

The final destination of the triumphal procession was the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus on the Capitoline hill, where the triumphator was expected to sacrifice three white bulls and dedicate the spoils of war which he had vowed before his departure (Livy 49.42.1–7). The precise route of the procession from the southern Campus Martius to the Capitoline hill is still not certain, but an educated guess is possible.

As mentioned above, Plutarch has Paullus's procession going through the Circus Flaminius and Circus Maximus, while Josephus has Vespasian and Titus driving through the theaters. When Paullus triumphed, the theaters mentioned by Josephus (as noted above) had not yet been built, and so it is not clear if these theaters were meant to replace, or be added to, the circuses on the parade route. If we combine these two sources (admittedly, a potentially perilous approach), it is possible to trace a route from the Porticus Octavia through the Circus Flaminius and the Theater of Marcellus. (The Theaters of Pompey and Balbus could only have been a part of the procession if it began at a point farther north.) During one of Julius Caesar's triumphs, in 46 BCE, the axle of his chariot broke as the procession passed by the Velabrum (Suet. *Iul.* 37.2; cf. Cass. Dio 43.21.1), which is located in the valley between the Capitoline and Palatine hills. From there the Circus Maximus is next in line, occupying the valley between the Palatine and Aventine, which the procession may have entered through one of the starting gates and exited at the opposite, eastern end. At this point the route of the triumph is less certain still, but because we know it must have gone through the Forum Romanum, it is likely that it reached the Forum and the Sacra Via by the road that led up the valley between the Palatine and Caelian hills. Modern maps often identify this road as the Via Triumphalis, but such a name is not attested in antiquity. Once on the Sacra Via, the triumphing general drove down into and through the Forum and eventually ascended the Clivus Capitolinus to the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus.

The process of commemorating important victories through the construction of monuments had the consequent effect of defining, delimiting, and indeed monumentalizing the triumphal route (on these issues more generally, see Favro, [Chapter 30](#) of this volume). The theaters that provided a convenient viewing area for the spectators at the triumph of Vespasian and Titus are a case in point. Pompey's theater, dedicated in 55 BCE, housed representations of the nations he defeated in his eastern campaigns, which had featured

prominently in his triumphal procession in 61 BCE (Plut. *Pomp.* 45.2). The Theater of Balbus, dedicated in 13 BCE, was likely financed by the spoils of war that Lucius Cornelius Balbus paraded through Rome in his triumph in 19 BCE (cf. Cass. Dio 54.25.2; *LTUR* 5.30–1). Finally, the Theater of Marcellus, constructed by the emperor Augustus and dedicated in 13 or 11 BCE, bore the name of the emperor's nephew who had ridden a trace horse that helped draw his uncle's *quadriga* at the latter's triumph in 29 BCE and had been viewed as a possible successor (Suet. *Tib.* 6.4; Cass. Dio 53.30.2).

The Triumphal Procession: Cities, Nations, Rivers on Display

On the occasion of a triumph, Rome was transformed: a festive atmosphere prevailed in the city; the circuses and Forum Romanum were decorated; the Roman people, all dressed in clean or light-colored clothing, crowded into these public venues for a better view of the procession (Plut. *Aem.* 32.3; for Augustus's prohibition against dark-colored clothing at public events, see Suet. *Aug.* 40.5, 44.2). Temples were open, fragrant with garlands and burning incense, as they were on festival days and perhaps to display the spoils from previous triumphs housed within. This holiday atmosphere sometimes extended beyond a single day, as some triumphs required two or three days for a full display of the rewards of victory (cf. Brilliant 1999, 221). The marching order of the triumphal procession usually included the following elements, which indeed were so common that their absence elicited comment (Livy 31.49): the spoils of war (artwork and other treasures, including coined money) and armor captured in the war; sacrificial animals and vessels for libations; artistic representations of battle scenes; placards listing the cities sacked and peoples conquered; prisoners of war or representations of them; gold crowns; the Roman magistrates for the year and members of the senate; the returning general in his chariot followed by his soldiers.

Visual evidence of victory came in three forms: representations (*simulacra*) of conquered cities and conquered peoples as well as the natural landscape (rivers and mountains) now under Roman sway; tableaux of battle scenes; and (in a few instances) representations of the world. According to our literary accounts of triumphs, these various kinds of representations were quite different in execution. From about 200 BCE, captured cities were represented by three-dimensional models of city towers and walls (App. *Pun.* 66; Str. 3.4.13) constructed out of ivory, wood, or silver (Quint. *Inst.* 6.3.61; Cass. Dio 43.42.2; Ov. *Pont.* 3.4.105–6 and 2.1.37–38; Östenberg 2009, 199–205). In some triumphs, a large number of such representations appeared: Lucius Cornelius Scipio, for instance, in his triumph for his victory over king Antiochus in 189 BCE, displayed *simulacra* of 134 captured towns (Livy

Vanquished peoples and nations (*gentes* and *nationes*) as well as rivers were usually represented in statuary or human form, a practice that likely began when Pompey displayed in his triumph (61 BCE) the fourteen nations conquered in his lengthy campaigns (cf. Plut. *Pomp.* 45.2; Östenberg 2009, 219–30) and continued in Caesar’s triumphs (46 BCE), with the display of Gaul (Lucan 3.76–78) as well as Mauretania and Spain (Flor. 2.13.88–89). These personifications were likely clothed in native costume (cf. App. *Mith.* 117; Cass. Dio 56.34.3), with Gaul (for instance) wearing trousers. Ovid, for his part, imagines Germania with long, flowing hair, grieving, and awaiting, in chains, the executioner’s axe (*Tr.* 4.2.43–48; cf. *Pont.* 2.8.39–40; Östenberg 2009, 225–7). In Silius Italicus’s poetic reimagining of Scipio Africanus’s triumph in the Second Punic War, he describes Carthage kneeling with hands outstretched (*Pun.* 17.635–36; cf. Östenberg 2009, 199–200).

Rivers were also apparently depicted as personifications. Ovid imagines a future triumph of Tiberius in which the River Rhine will be paraded, with broken horns, covered with green sedge and discolored by its own blood – a vivid portrayal of defeat and devastation (*Tr.* 4.2.41–2). Since rivers, like mountains, marked boundaries, especially boundaries of the Roman empire – the Rhine in the north, the Nile in the south, the Tigris and Euphrates in the east, and Oceanus surrounding all of the known world – their display in a triumph effectively demonstrated Roman dominion over the world (Östenberg 2009, 230–45). Still, it is not clear whether these are historically accurate descriptions of how *nationes* or rivers were displayed at a triumph or literary conventions. When an author speaks of “Gaul” paraded, for instance, might he not mean spoils or captives of Gaul rather than a personification of the people?

Such detailed representations of sometimes obscure and remote peoples and places required explanation. Propertius, in his imagined triumph, expects to read the list of cities conquered (3.4.16: *...titulis oppida capta legam*). Similarly, in Pompey’s triumph of 61 BCE, placards listing all the nations he had conquered – some, no doubt, with exotic-sounding names – went at the head of the procession (Plut. *Pomp.* 45.2), demonstrating, as Pompey himself had boasted, that peoples that had once been on the fringes of the empire were now fully within its boundaries (Plin. *HN* 7.99). Such placards also accompanied the displays of precious metals and coins, whose purpose was to show in precise numerical terms the vast quantities of booty that were now destined for the state treasury or to be used to finance public building.

Probably the most striking exhibits were the tableaux that provided a visual narrative of the war, including scenes of the most noteworthy battles. Josephus’s account of Vespasian and Titus’s triumph of 71 CE describes traveling stages (*pegmata*) – one might imagine modern parade floats – tottering three and four storeys high and decorated with tapestries showing

countryside laid waste, houses and other buildings in flames, cities and fortresses besieged and destroyed, and the enemy fleeing, captured, and put to the sword (*BJ* 7.139–47; cf. also Pompey's triumph of 61 BCE, in which king Mithridates and Tigranes were shown fighting, vanquished, or fleeing from battle (App. *Mith.* 117)). On each stage rode an enemy commander, a participant in the scene depicted in the tableau, now shown (in Josephus's words) in the manner in which he had been captured.

What did these performances look like? In general terms, a possible analogy was the practice of having condemned prisoners executed in the arena while wearing the dress and playing the role of a character in a story from mythology (Coleman 1990, 61). The added detail in Josephus's account of Vespasian and Titus' triumph, that an enemy commander was placed on each stage in a posture of defeat, further suggests that these captives, similar to the condemned prisoners in the arena, were somehow compelled to participate in the reenactment of their capture. Another source seems to confirm the general picture of a painted backdrop (*graphai*) with accompanying gestures and movements (*schêmata*) (App. *Pun.* 66), suggesting a multimedia display with elaborately worked scenes in paintings and tapestries against which actors acted out, perhaps with only simple gestures and postures (as the word *schêmata* suggests), specific events in the campaign (for a more detailed discussion of these tableaux, see Östenberg 2009, 245–61; cf. Brilliant 1999, 227; but cf. also Plin. *Pan.* 17.1–2, who describes prisoners of war at a triumph with their hands bound, which would have hindered a performance on their part of any sort).

A possible inspiration for the traveling stages at the triumph of Vespasian and Titus was the emperor Claudius's reenactment of the siege and capture of a town in Britain, though not a part of his British triumph itself (Suet. *Claud.* 21.6). Claudius's triumph was the last true imperial triumph before that of Vespasian and Titus, and it is possible that the performance that Josephus describes was a form of one-upmanship on the part of Vespasian and Titus, who incorporated into the triumphal procession a spectacle that previously had been performed separately.

Captives on Display

The captured soldiers manning the traveling stages in Vespasian's triumph were only one way in which such enemy captives were put on display. Indeed, the parade of captives was in our literary tradition one of the most compelling features of a triumphal procession. Following the placards listing all the nations conquered by Pompey at his triumph, for instance, were representatives of each nation and also pirates, who had been taken captive in the war on the seas, all unbound and parading in native costume (App. *Mith.*

116) – clear and colorful visual evidence of the expansion of the Roman empire and the security of the seas that resulted from Pompey’s conquests. The prestige of a triumph increased greatly as a result of the distinguished captives in the procession, especially kings and children of kings (cf. *Mon. Anc.* 4.3). Aemilius Paullus’s triumph of 167 BCE saw Perseus’s children first, accompanied by teachers and foster-parents, in a posture of supplication, weeping and stretching out their hands to the spectators. Then, attended by members of his court, in the high boots of his native land, and in chains, came Perseus himself, a paradigm of the vagaries of human fortune (Plut. *Aem.* 34.1; cf. Livy 45.40.6). Although Perseus was an almost tragic figure, the spectators shed tears for his children, the real objects of their pity. An ever-present risk of triumphs was that the captives could steal the spotlight, drawing more attention perhaps even than the triumphing general himself. The sight of Cleopatra’s sister, Arsinoë IV, once a queen, paraded in chains at Caesar’s triumph in 46 BCE evoked the pity of the spectators (Cass. Dio 43.19.2–4), as did Thusnelda at Germanicus’s triumph in 17 CE (cf. Tac. *Ann.* 2.41; Beard 2007, 107–11).

Not surprisingly, vanquished kings dreaded the prospect of parading captive on the streets of Rome. Paullus’s response to Perseus, who pleaded not to be led in triumph, was that he had the power to escape the humiliation – by taking his own life. Perseus refused and was branded a coward (Plut. *Aem.* 34.3–4). In contrast, Mithridates VI opted to commit suicide (App. *Mith.* 111), as did, most famously, Cleopatra, who chose to die by the bite of an asp rather than adorn Octavian’s triumph (Plut. *Ant.* 84.7; cf. Beard 2007, 114–19). Whether reality or Roman conceit, suicide came to be regarded as an alternative to being led in triumph. Nevertheless, such absent enemies could be represented by images, in some cases showing their death scene. In Octavian’s Actian triumph (August, 29 BCE), for instance, an image of Cleopatra on a couch was borne in the procession, as part of a tableau of her death with an asp clinging to her breast (Cass. Dio 51.21.8; Plut. *Ant.* 86.6). In a similar way, an image of Mithridates had been conveyed in Pompey’s triumph, made of gold and eight cubits tall (3.7 meters), together with a tableau depicting his death scene along with his daughters who chose to die with him (App. *Mith.* 117). Just two years previously, his predecessor in the command against Mithridates, Lucius Licinius Lucullus, had celebrated a triumph in his Mithridatic war with a statue of Mithridates that was six feet tall (1.78 meters) (Plut. *Luc.* 37.3–6). Not only was the statue of Mithridates displayed in Pompey’s triumph double that size but the death scene will have demonstrated that his defeat of Mithridates, a long-standing enemy of Rome, was now definitive.

Spoils of War

The spoils of war at the head of the triumphal procession were the fulfillment of the general's vow to Jupiter, promising these spoils before he embarked on his campaign. They generally fell into three broad categories: first, weapons and armor of the enemy; second, all manner of cultural artifacts (statuary, paintings, tapestries, vessels of various kinds, and, in one instance, a law code); and third, precious metals of all kinds. In Aemilius Paullus's triumph of 167 BCE Macedonian weaponry was polished to a shine and artfully arranged "so as to appear random" (Plut. *Aem.* 32.5). Armor so displayed, as if taken directly from the battlefield, was a reminder of the conclusion of hostilities and the advent of peace (Östenberg 2009, 22–30).

Artworks – the cultural treasures of the vanquished enemy – made for an even more impressive show. Marcus Claudius Marcellus set the precedent in his *ovatio* (lesser triumph) of 211 BCE that celebrated his conquest of Syracuse by parading statues and vessels dedicated to the Syracusan gods (Plut. *Marc.* 21.1–2). This and subsequent displays at triumphs, such as those of Lucius Scipio over king Antiochus in 189 BCE (Livy 37.59) and Marcus Fulvius Nobilior over the Aetolians in 187 BCE (Livy 39.5.13–17), gave rise to laments that importing such luxuries would weaken Roman moral character (Plin. *HN* 33.53.148; cf. Livy 39.6.7). Luxury items were often associated with banqueting: dining couches and costly coverlets, gold and silver plate, and bronze vessels of various kinds. Other precious metals were on display, gold and silver coins, as well as precious gemstones (Plin. *HN* 37.6.13–14 (on Pompey's triumph); Östenberg 2009, 97–108). Some of these objects symbolized the vanquishing of kings (Östenberg 2009, 94–7): at Paullus's triumph the gold plate (*chrusomata*) of Perseus, his empty chariot, and arms topped with his crown were followed by Perseus himself on foot and in chains. Pompey's triumph paraded the couch of Darius I (son of Hystaspes), legendary Persian king, as well as the throne and scepter of King Mithridates (App. *Mith.* 116).

There was also a historical dimension that could enhance the impact of the triumphal procession on the minds of spectators. We have already noted how the route of the triumph took the triumphing general past monuments of previous honorands, and it was possible for a triumphator from a prominent family to evoke the memory of a distinguished ancestor who had previously celebrated a triumph. Indeed, Livy (37.59.2) claims that the triumph of Lucius Scipio (over King Antiochus in 189 BCE) was a grander spectacle than that of his more famous brother, Publius Scipio Africanus, the conqueror of Hannibal in the Second Punic War. In Pompey's triumph, some of the spoils on display included, as noted above, the couch of Darius I, which showed that Pompey's victory extended beyond Mithridates (one of Rome's most recalcitrant enemies) to include Darius, the master of the Persian empire from whom Mithridates claimed descent (Mayor 2010, 37; Bosworth and Wheatley 1998). By including Darius's couch among the spoils of the war against Mithridates,

Pompey made himself into a latter-day Alexander, for, like Alexander before him, he was also a great conqueror of eastern empires. This comparison became more explicit through Pompey's dress, which included a cloak (*chlamys*) that belonged to Alexander instead of the customary triumphal costume (App. *Mith.* 117). Pompey thus gave his own triumph a larger historical significance.

Triumphing General and Chariot

In our source tradition, the culmination of the procession was the appearance of the triumphing general in his chariot drawn by four horses. In the triumphs that lasted multiple days the general usually appeared on the final day, the other days serving in part to build suspense and anticipation. The triumphing general did not dress in military garb but wore a ceremonial costume, consisting of a *toga purpurea* (crimson-colored toga) and *tunica palmata* (tunic with a palm-width border), that reputedly dated back to the Etruscans (Bonfante Warren 1970, 59). By the third century BCE the *toga picta* (toga with designs in gold thread) replaced the *toga purpurea* and the *tunica palmata* changed form and now bore a palmette design (Festus 228 L). The general is sometimes described as wearing red make-up (*minium*), perhaps in imitation of Jupiter (Plin. *HN* 33.36.111–2), bearing a scepter, and wearing a laurel wreath. According to some of our sources, a slave rode in the chariot with him and whispered in his ear a reminder that he was “only a man” (Zonar. 7.21), the implication being that the whole ceremony, especially the general's conveyance, dress, and accoutrements, made him something more than mortal (Beard 2007, 219–56; Versnel 1970, 56–93).

If it is correct to believe that the spectators at a triumph in the Republican period interpreted the sight of enemy captives, especially the captive royalty, as being symbolic of the Republic's superiority over monarchy, what were they to make of the appearance of the general in his chariot, not looking like a general at all, but outfitted more like a king or a god? The enemy captives and tableaux of battle scenes, as well as enemy cities besieged and captured, brought the foreign and exotic – the “other” – to the streets of Rome in a strikingly visual manner. The triumphing general, for his part, in his dress and bearing, in his conveyance and accoutrements was the incarnation of a divinity or the representation of supreme human achievement.

Spectators at the Triumph

How did the spectators react? Were they passive observers or active participants in these spectacles? Unfortunately, our sources focus almost exclusively on the objects and people in the procession and comment only sparingly about those watching. The people, wearing clean and light-colored clothing, crowded the public spaces of the city – the circuses and fora, even standing on the steps of temples and other public buildings. The captives parading in colorful native dress would have stood out against the light and probably monochromatic background of the Roman spectators. Lictors were required to hold back the crowds, although our sources do not describe them as ever becoming unruly or violent – unusual for a city populace that was known for its rowdiness at other public events, such as games, assemblies, and even funerals (cf. Brilliant 1999).

That rowdiness was apparently kept in check did not mean that the spectators were entirely passive. The vivid tableaux of battle scenes and the display of captives often evoked emotional responses. We have already noted that the sight of Perseus's children, of Arsinoë IV, and of Thusnelda evoked the pity of the spectators. At Caesar's triumph of 46 BCE, the spectators groaned at their own misfortunes when they saw a depiction of Quintus Scipio's death, applauded the deaths of Achilles and Pothinus, and laughed at the flight of Pharnaces (App. *B Civ* 2.101.420). The triumph was a celebration of Roman victory, but the captives and spoils on display, even though they were of the enemy, could have served as a reminder that defeat was never far away (Beard 2007, 133–9). That Caesar's triumphs included celebrations of victories in civil war might have contributed to the spectators' identification with Arsinoë, since they were even more likely under these circumstances to identify with the conquered. Indeed, Dio comments that the spectators felt pity for Arsinoë because in her plight they saw their own misfortunes (Cass. Dio 43.19.4). The scenes of the deaths of famous Romans, such as Scipio and Cato, would have struck the spectators even closer to home. A triumph for victory in a civil war was a perversion of a typical triumph: the victor was Roman but so was the enemy. Caesar's triumph would have made this evident. After all, Cato had given speeches on the Rostra and in the senate house, stood for election on the Campus Martius, and sponsored legislation that was voted on in front of the Temple of Castor in the Forum. Now, a representation of his death scene was paraded past these very monuments of his political career in much the same manner that Pompey had paraded the death scene of Mithridates.

Conclusion

A given triumphal procession existed in a specific, and narrow, time and place. It endured for a day or two or three after the conclusion of a successful military campaign and played out on the streets of Rome. But the time and

place – really the times and places – represented in this procession were broad and deep. The world came to Rome in all its exotic foreignness – peoples, royalty, cities, mountains, rivers, artworks, and other cultural artifacts – and soldiers as well as the battlefield – were on display. The historical dimension of the triumphal procession begins with the route of the triumph itself, carving a path through the symbolic topography of Rome and linking processionally the most important public spaces in the city. This historical dimension extended to the captives and spoils as well – kings who were scions of long-standing royal dynasties, and couches and other paraphernalia that once belonged to famous kings of the past – and to the triumphing general himself, who was in a sense the descendant of Romulus, the first Roman to triumph. Or a more recent historical model was intentionally evoked, as was the case with Pompey. The triumphal procession thus demonstrated most spectacularly Rome's place in the world and in history.

Guide to Further Reading

The Roman triumph has received its fair share of scholarly attention in recent years. Mary Beard's monograph (2007) focuses on literary representations of the triumph (a "ritual in ink"), exploding in the process many modern myths about the triumph and demonstrating how elusive the historical triumph actually is; Itgenshorst (2005) follows a similar approach initially, finding flaws in later imperial accounts of Roman Republican triumphs, and ultimately attempts to locate the triumph in the political culture of Rome (cf. also Bastien 2007). Pittenger (2008) continues this emphasis on the literary triumph by analyzing triumphal debates in the pages of Livy's history as arenas of political contention as a way of illuminating the complexities of senatorial politics in Republican Rome (cf. also Richardson 1976). Scholars have also turned to performance studies and spectacle as useful theoretical frameworks in which to analyze the triumph, increasingly incorporating the consideration of space and topography (Brilliant 1999; Martini 2008; La Rocca 2008; Östenberg 2009; Favro 2014). Several investigators situate the triumph within a broader Roman culture of war continuously evident in Rome's art, buildings, and events (Dillon and Welch 2006). Popkin (2016) is a critical study of the architecture of the triumph. Earlier studies of the Roman triumph are still very useful, focusing principally on questions of its origins (e.g., Versnel 1970; Bonfante Warren 1970; but cf. also Auliard 2001, who analyzes the rules that determined when triumphs were awarded). Künzl (1988) is a striking analysis of the logistics of the triumphal procession. Scholarship has tended to focus on the triumph in the Roman Republic, even though the ceremony persisted until the late empire. We are still lacking, for instance, a monograph on the Roman imperial triumph (cf. McCormick 1986,

1–10). In addition to Beard (2007) and Östenberg (2009), who include the imperial triumph in their discussions of the triumph writ large, see also Balbuza (2002, 2004) for a discussion of the imperial triumph as a means of communicating imperial ideology and its role in strategies of succession (respectively). On the ceremony of the imperial *adventus*, which came to replace the triumph proper, see Lehen (1997) and MacCormack (1972).

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CHAPTER THIRTY

Urban Commemoration: The *Pompa Triumphalis* in Rome

Diane Favro

In the early twenty-first century, the triumph is triumphing. In addition to numerous recent scholarly analyses, novels, films, pop songs, and performance pieces celebrate and interrogate the event.¹ Of course, everyone loves a parade, but, especially today, audiences are drawn to historical celebrations of military campaigns with (allegedly) definitive victories and supportive crowds. Contemporary studies of the Roman triumph have unshackled scholarship from a preoccupation with the ritual's origins and route. Critical reassessments underscore that much of what we claim to "know" about the Roman triumph is based on very thin evidence, or on retrojections composed in antiquity to meet the needs of later political and cultural agendas. Close readings of ancient texts describing the triumph (so-called "rituals in ink") has heightened temporal specificity, moving away from consideration of the triumph as an unchanging event toward the evaluation of individual examples as shaped by particular political and societal forces (Beard 2003, 21–43; Sumi 2005; Künzl 1988). The widening sphere of inquiry has stimulated examination of event staging and logistics, artistic representations, audience reaction, sensorial experience, semantics, and syntax of the triumph (Östenberg 2009). Increasingly, the physical realm is part of the inquiry (Marin 2001, 38–53).

The earliest proscriptions required the triumphal parade (*pompa triumphalis*) to be performed in Rome, the acknowledged wellspring of Roman civilization. The connection with the setting was defining, reciprocal, and essential. In many ways, *romanitas* (what it meant to be a Roman) was defined by a culture of triumph (Beard 2007, 42–71; Dillon and Welch 2006). Ancient authors tell us that from the earliest days Roman self-identity was largely formed by concepts, rankings, and achievements that evolved from military conquest. Writing in the late first century BCE, Livy noted the capital was, "founded by force of arms" (1.19.1) and that "the Romans considered no specific, mythical honor more splendid than that of a triumph" (30.15.12). Throughout its history, the capital city was awash with triumphal imagery, from the piles of original or replicated captured armor displayed on houses and public buildings, to the regalia worn in funerals which represented ancestral triumphators; from the innumerable inscriptions and grand monuments proclaiming victories, to the recurring celebrations. The state-

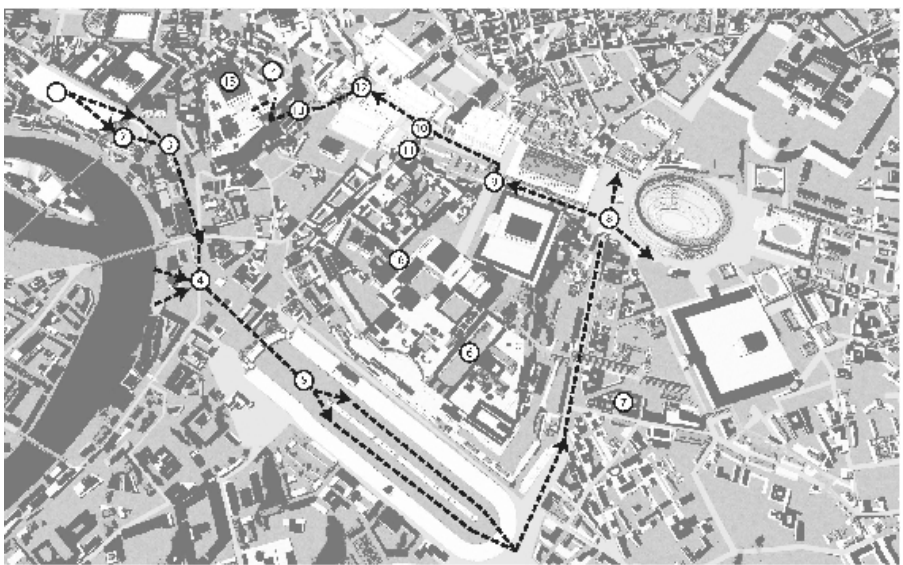
sanctioned religious rituals served as thanks to the gods and purification for blood spilt. At the same time, the *pompa triumphalis* with its captives and booty affirmed the individual general's achievement and, in its earliest manifestations, the establishment of peace and return of farmer-soldiers to civilian life. Simultaneously, the triumph celebrated Rome's status as capital.

While rituals can have meaning without an audience, the Roman triumph was above all an important social unifier that had to be seen to be believed, literally and figuratively (La Rocca 2010, 34–55). The showy triumphal rite justified war to diverse audiences. For urban residents, the triumph underscored the state's military prowess as evidenced in displays of painted battle scenes, innumerable captives, and powerful war machines. The sheer difficulty of putting together a triumphal parade was an affirmation of Roman military organizational and technical skill. In his triumph of 187 BCE, M. Fulvius Nobilior impressed the audience with artillery, catapults and siege machines (Livy 39.5.6). The parading of 110 warships for the *triumphus navalis* of Lucullus in 63 BCE elicited gasps from the crowds (Plut. *Luc.* 37.3), as did floats four stories in height at the triumph of Titus and Vespasian in 71 CE (Joseph. *BJ* 7.132; Östenberg 2009, 46–54). At the same time, the triumph provided many parade participants with their first experience of Rome. Looking at the city's monuments, soldiers from throughout the Roman world situated their achievements in an impressive historical continuum. Defeated leaders returned to their homelands as converted allies full of stories about the capital, its history, and white-clad citizens (Plut. *Aem.* 32.2). After gawking at the towering buildings and endless victory monuments, the captives paraded through Rome realized resistance was futile; for some, the humiliating experience became a rite of passage leading to incorporation into Roman society (Beard 2007, 140).

The triumph's origins are muddy. The *pompa triumphalis* incorporated features from Etruscan rites, the processions of Hellenistic rulers, and various Latin rituals, including the funeral, to form a uniquely Roman event set in a uniquely Roman *locus* (Hölkeskamp 2010, 61–65, 115; Versnel 1970; La Rocca and Tortorella 2008). The awarding of the honor was complex, competitive, and political. The regulations and form of the rite were ever in flux; specifics for any one event are few. A brief, necessarily generalized, description of the event's criteria and configuration in the Republic sets the stage. To be eligible for consideration, a general with *imperium maius* (legitimized supreme power of command) had to be engaged in a state-sanctioned war against a foreign enemy and celebrate a single victorious battle that resulted in the deaths of at least 5,000 enemies and the expansion of Roman territory. If the criteria were met, jubilant soldiers in the field proclaimed their leader *imperator*, anticipating praise and donatives once back in Rome. A general who felt he had sufficient political support for the awarding of the honor immediately sent missives reporting his achievement

and requesting (or demanding) the Senate and People of Rome grant him a triumph. Gathering the most impressive booty and captives, along with representative troops, he set off for the capital. Reaching Rome, the large armed entourage gathered in the Campus Martius (Field of the war-god Mars), north of the city center, since ritual law prohibited the bearing of arms or holding of *imperium maius* within the sacred urban boundary (*pomerium*). After taking an oath that the triumphal criteria were met, the general began intense lobbying for senatorial votes (Val. Max. 2.8.1–4). Senators debated outside the *pomerium*, contemplating whether the achievement warranted a triumph, or a lesser recognition such as an *ovatio*. If the decision was favorable, the Senate proclaimed the general *triumphator* with the right to retain his *imperium* and arms inside the city, and declared a holiday, allocating resources (including booty) for the event.²

The parade formally began with the ceremonial crossing of the *pomerium* in the south-western Campus Martius, continued in a loop around the Palatine Hill, moved north-west through the Roman Forum, and finally up the Capitoline Hill where the general made ritual sacrifices before the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus (Map 15). The carefully ordered parade components overtly proclaimed the military challenges and benefits of war (see Sumi, Chapter 29 in this volume). Parading magistrates (in one case the entire Senate; Val. Max 7.5.4) affirmed state approval. The general appeared in the middle of the parade, followed by soldiers who acknowledged his leadership abilities in rowdy comments (Brilliant 1999; Martini 2008, 75–94; La Rocca 2008; Beard 2007, 72–106). Every triumphator put his own unique stamp on the *pompa triumphalis*, selecting and arranging participants and displays for calculated effect. Aemilius Paullus in 167 BCE emphasized the scale of the enemy forces by parading, “1200 wagons filled with embossed white shields, then another 1200 filled with bronze shields, and 300 more laden with lances, pikes, bows, and javelins...and 800 shields mounted on poles” (Diod. Sic. 31.8.14–16). Pompey in 61 BCE highlighted the number and wealth of nations defeated by meticulously listing all 14 on placards and displaying 75,100,000 silver coins heaped in wagons (App. *Mith.* 116). Octavian (Augustus) assumed the lead position at the *pompa triumphalis* of 29 BCE, to affirm his dominant power (Cass. Dio 51.21). Though ancient authors may have exaggerated or altered the specifics, their depictions consistently emphasize the overwhelming pomp and grandeur of Roman triumphal parades.



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|--------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Circus Flaminius area | 5. Circus Maximus | 8. Arch of Titus | 13. Circus Capitolinus |
| 2. Theatre of Marcellus | 6. Palatine Hill | 10. Portico across entry to Forum | 14. Capitoline Hill |
| 3. Forum Tiberinum | 7. Caelian Hill | 11. Arch of Augustus | 15. Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus |
| 4. Forum Boarium | 8. Arch of Constantine and Meta Sudans | 12. Area in front of Curia | 16. Temple of Apollo |

Map 15 Hypothetical, generalized triumphal path through Late Antique Rome.

(Image by Marie Saldaña).

The specific logistics of the triumph and its impact on the living city are unclear. Procession organizers are rarely named (Künzl 1988, 65–84). The equestrian T. Flavius Germanus served as *curator triumphi* for Commodus in 180 CE, though the title is uncommon (*CIL* 14.2911). Probably an informal network of officials, and *collegia* of transporters and workers provided data on the city’s current physical state, including blocked streets and major construction projects under way. The triumphator assumed a dominant role in developing the iconographic program, at times with divine guidance (Polyb. 6.15.8). One can imagine he consulted erudite experts (similar to the great humanists in Renaissance courts) familiar with the meanings associated with specific sites, buildings, and art in Rome, as well as with current political issues and alliances. Carefully calculating all variables, the triumphator and his advisors programmed a route that accommodated large-scale, diverse parade components, while simultaneously presenting a directed narrative. In so doing, they drew upon the Romans’ ability to forge coherent stories by weaving together the various meanings associated with buildings, objects, and places encountered while in motion. By programming the triumphal procession to pass by or within view of specific buildings, artworks, and topographical sites with positive associations, or to avoid sites with negative meanings, the organizers shaped a curated story that stood out amid the intertwined skein of urban narratives woven through Rome’s urban fabric (Plattus 1983; Favro 1994; La Rocca 2008).

In anticipation of a *pompa triumphalis*, town criers announced the date and route, possibly posting details on white boards in the Forum. Such advance notice was essential to allow organizers to relocate or reschedule other processions, contractors to build bleachers, transporters to cancel or reroute deliveries, and city residents to find good viewing spots. On the day of the celebration, trumpets, and cheering crowds heralded the advent of the parade, while servitors and lictors, “drove back all who crowded into or ran across the main avenue” (Diod. Sic. 31.8.10; Plut. *Aem.* 32.2). There is no evidence the lively crowds were cordoned off from the action. Along the route, participants and spectators exchanged words and gestures, threw flowers and coins, and interrelated in numerous other ways (Ov. *Tr.* 4.2; see Sumi). After the event, clean-up fell to the usual officials and the owners of property along the route.

Ancient texts on the Roman triumph come primarily from the imperial period. The rite’s seemingly coherent early history derives from calculated later editing, as imperial writers clarified and redirected the story to inform contemporary practice. According to such retrojection, Rome’s founder, Romulus, is credited with founding the tradition, and every subsequent king received the honor. The tradition continued in the Republican period, as hegemonic military expansion provided illustrious victories. In the late third and second centuries BCE, conquests in the southern and eastern Mediterranean brought a constant flow of rich booty (*manubia*) into Rome. Each triumphal procession boasted more extravagant displays than the last; the flood of art and cash transformed public taste and further enhanced the status of triumphators. To provide some control and constraints, the Senate began to restrict recipients to consuls. Competition between consul-generals in the first century BCE led to further escalation as each triumphator aimed to present more eye-catching displays; triumphs occurred frequently, but not regularly (see Sumi, [Chapter 29](#) in this volume).

The Imperial period brought a significant shift (Krasser, Pausch, and Petrovic 2008; Sumi 2005). In 12 BCE, Augustus displayed the *Fasti Triumphales* in the Roman Forum listing all accepted victory celebrations. The inscription allowed some room for future additions, but in fact marked a major reconceptualization; after 19 BCE only the emperor’s family celebrated triumphs. Such a restriction served the new imperial state, and also reflected a changing military situation as battles increasingly preserved, rather than extended, territorial holdings. No longer did people ponder whether a particular campaign was “triumph-worthy”, as had Cicero in the mid first century BCE (*Fam.* 8.5.1). Victorious generals outside the imperial family received the trappings of a triumph (*insignia triumphalis* or *ornamenta triumphalis*), but not the splashier, more memorable honor of a parade in the capital. As a result, the number of processions plummeted. More than one triumphal celebration a year became rare; many decades offered none. No wonder imperial authors, for all their discussions of Republican ceremonies,

never collated a *Fasti Triumphales* for their own period. Rome's residents did, however, frequently experience other rituals that assumed many qualities of a triumph, from celebrations for the emperor's birthday to those marking his formal arrival and departure. In addition, new as well as existing artworks and monuments continuously reinforced the culture of triumph throughout the city.

The City Shapes the Performance

The Romans considered physical environments animate. Each place had an energized spirit (*genius loci*), each temple celebrated its birthday (*dies natalis*), the humanized goddess Roma represented the capital city. Conceptualized as a living thing, Rome assumed ongoing, active roles in the triumph, operating simultaneously as choreographer, participant, and audience (Plut. *Mor.* 559). The city's involvement began on the Capitoline; rising from the low-lying shores of the Tiber and relatively compact, the hill dominated viewsheds from northern approaches, the river, and the Roman Forum, and from early days served as a stronghold and religious center. Before leaving on campaign, a general climbed up the steep slope to the temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus, seeking divine sanction and affirmation as representative of the collective (Livy 45.39.11–12; Kuttner 1995). Of course, not all generals earned a triumph, but those who did, returned to the same spot to offer gifts and prayers in thanks. The processual, temporal, and physical ties to the Capitoline are encapsulated on a silver cup from Boscoreale commemorating the triumph of Tiberius in 8/7 BCE (Figure 30.1). On one side the artist depicted Jupiter's temple with an animal sacrifice substituting for the general's oral vow; on the other Tiberius riding in a procession. Moving counterclockwise around the cup, the triumphator eternally emulates his circular path from the Capitoline Hill, to the battlefield, and back again, a ceremonial loop that affirmed Rome's undisputable role in victory and the hilltop as a lightning-rod for Roman power and identity (Livy 45.39).



Figure 30.1 Drawing of unrolled reliefs on a Julio-Claudian silver cup from Boscoreale showing a sacrifice in front of the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus, and the triumphator in a chariot.

Once acclaimed *imperator* in the battlefield, the victorious general began his return to Rome. During the Republic, word of mouth stories about the extra-urban procession reached the city in advance of the approaching convoy, promoting groundswells of support for senatorial approval. If the honor were denied or declined, the pre-event convoy served as an ersatz triumphal parade. In the early third century CE, the emperor Septimius Severus allegedly refused a triumph in order not to detract from celebrations for his *decennalia* (Beard 2007, 322–33). Nevertheless, his honorific arch in the Roman Forum includes four narrow relief panels showing soldiers, captured Parthia, and wagonloads covered for transport marching relentlessly toward the goddess Roma seated on the right. Lacking banners, floats, and visible displays of booty, and the general in chariot, the scene represents a convoy approaching the capital, not the *pompa triumphalis*.

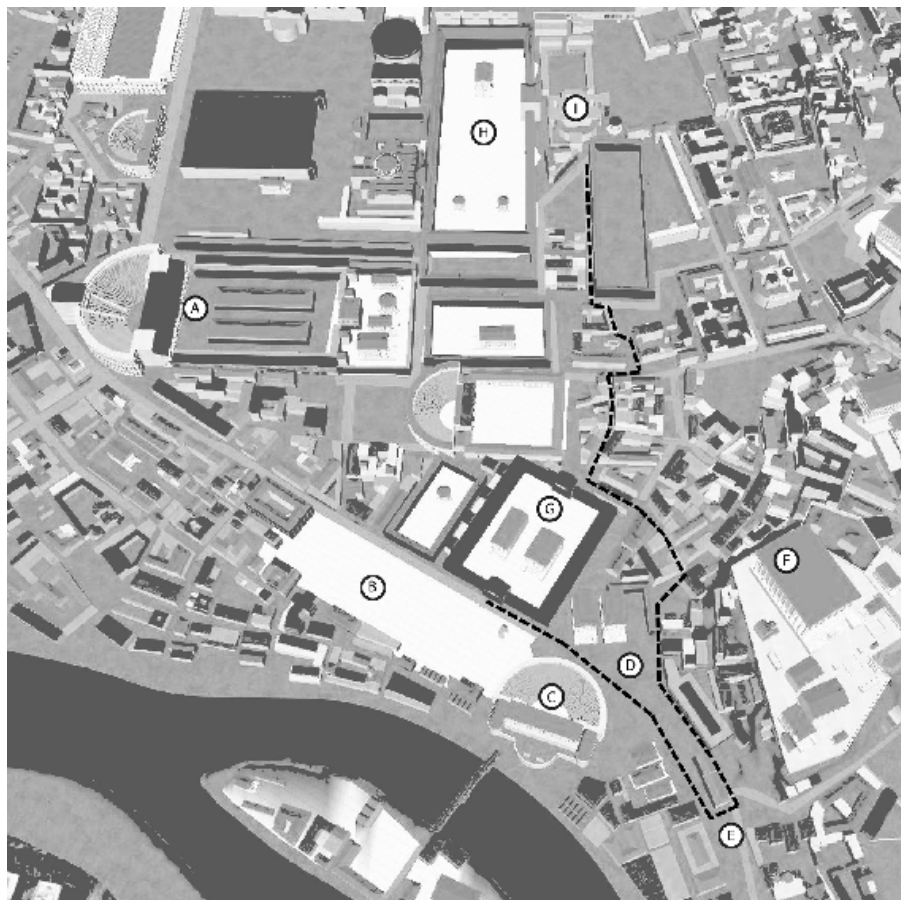
On reaching Rome, the aspiring triumphator and his troops first gathered in the Campus Martius. Convoys approaching from the south or east moved around almost the entire city to reach the plain without crossing the *pomerium*. Such circumambulation took time and confounded urban traffic, but advertised and commemorated with every step the general's achievements. Josephus writes that Rome emptied as residents rushed to meet emperor Titus and his son as they neared the capital before being awarded a triumph in 71 CE (*BJ* 7.120–23). Convoys arriving by water likewise presented a dramatic sight as barges laden with booty moved slowly up the Tiber to dock along the riverbanks by the Campus Martius. Aemilius Paullus sailed in a captured royal vessel heaped with Macedonian spoils and adorned with textiles (*Livy* 45.35.3). During the Senate's deliberations, triumphal goods were often displayed in the Field of Mars; those too large or awkward to transport in the parade remained there on exhibition. In 63 BCE, Lucullus placed captured weapons and siege engines in the Circus Flaminius forming, "a great spectacle in itself, and far from contemptible" (*Plut. Luc.* 37.2).

The troops and other members of the retinue camped in the open plain or found shelter in existing structures, while the general carefully selected a temporary dwelling. Modern sources often identify the Villa Publica as the preferred abode, though aspirants chose different sites based on personal convenience and propaganda value (Beard 2007, 95–6; see Sumi, this volume, [Chapter 29](#)). For example, Vespasian and Titus took up residence in (or near) the Temple of Isis to spark memory of help given by the goddess to the emperor's younger son. Some triumphators chose a site in the southern Campus near the Temple of Bellona where Senators deliberated. Once a favorable vote was announced, preparations for the procession began in earnest. The plain became a beehive of activity as workers prepared float-like trays (*fercula*), *tableau vivant*, models of captured cities, and other parade components. Aemilius Paullus observed that the organization of such grand

spectacles required the same skills and mental toughness as a military campaign (Diod. Sic. 31.8.13).

On the day of the event, parade components gradually coalesced at the southern Campus Martius. By the first century BCE, urban development had transformed the plain into an entertainment zone filled with monumental complexes loosely aligned into an orthogonal configuration that hindered the movement of large objects. To provide optimal spectator viewing, organizers directed the parade through the large spectator venues in the Campus, with larger displays diverted around the theaters (Joseph. *BJ* 7.123). Manubial objects and sculptures placed on the *scenae frons* created dazzling backdrops for the procession, reminding theater-goers of the triumph for months to come (Klar 2006). Audiences seated in the theaters, as well as those looking outward from the lofty external arcades, viewed parade participants at their freshest. The jubilation of the participating soldiers was contagious; not only had they just received cash bonuses, but they were about to do the unthinkable: walk through Rome in full armor (Östenberg 2009, 65–6).

The parade entered Rome at the Porta Triumphalis, a blocked gate opened specifically for this event. Or so held academic tradition; today scholars allow for more variability (Wiseman 2008, 390–91). Josephus describes the actions in the Campus Martius on the morning of Vespasian's triumph (*BJ* 7.123–31). At daybreak, the emperor and his son donned purple garb and laurel garlands and set out to meet the Senate and magistrates at the Porticus Octaviae. Vespasian and Titus may have then moved south from the Temple of Isis, past the Porta Triumphalis to reach the south-western façade of the porticus (Map 16). There the two triumphators surmounted a temporary platform, with the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus as a potent backdrop looming behind.³ They gave prayers and made a brief address to the soldiers arrayed in civilian garb. The troops then went to a breakfast in the Campus Martius organized by the emperor before donning armor for the parade. Vespasian and Titus processed back by the triumphal gate to a nearby site for their own meal and to change into triumphal regalia before joining the parade (see Sumi, this volume, Chapter 29). This invaluable description, however, represents one unique choreography; other triumphators selected different residences, staging areas, and paths.



Map 16 South-western Campus Martius in the Imperial period with possible route of Vespasian and Titus on the morning of their triumph in 71 CE, based on the description in Josephus.

(Image by Marie Saldaña).

Crossing the *pomerium*, the triumphal parade processed around the Palatine toward the Capitoline. Ancient artworks present the event with forceful linearity, the figures and displays solemnly moving at an even pace (usually left to right) on level ground. Such simplified depictions are misleading. The intraurban beginning and ending points of the *pompa triumphalis* are often emphasized, yet in reality parade audiences had limited views of either locale during the celebrations. Firsthand spectatorship of the Porta Triumphalis and Capitoline was not required. The relentless processual flow, as directed and powerful as a river's, was deeply etched in the collective consciousness (Joseph. *BJ* 7.140). Overall, the speed and composition of the procession varied, responding to numerous factors, from the speed of different vehicles and weariness of performers, to unexpected occurrences and topographic demands. In a given triumph, a wagon required extra pushing up a slope,

captives balked, a *ferculum* needed fresh porters, or soldiers paused to drink (Livy 3.29.4–5). Plutarch records that the elephants pulling Pompey's chariot in 61 BCE were too wide for an arch, necessitating a halt while horses were brought to replace the lumbering animals (*Pomp.* 14.4). Along the linear route, the parade encountered open spaces, characterized by Richard Brilliant as “nodes of affirmative action (*celebratio*) and arrest” (Brilliant 1974, 56; Plattus 1983). Here, organizers relieved the linearity of the procession by programming expansive performances of varying duration. At a broad intersection, captives could reenact a battle scene before a painted screen; in a forum performers could spread out to execute complex dances; in the circus soldiers could show off complex military maneuvers.

Audience behavior and location are not well documented, but mobility may be hypothesized. After jostling to glimpse the shuffling captives at street level, observers could rush upstairs to better see paintings and banners held aloft. Private viewing spots offered other benefits; Propertius read the names of captured cities passing by his window while in the arms of his paramour (Prop. 3.4.15–18; Favro 2008). The parade climaxed with passage of the triumphator, elevated in his chariot above the crowds. After he passed, some spectators may have hastened ahead of the slow-moving parade to catch another view, or hurried to a known processional node to see a performance where great floats or even ships joined the pageant. Few would have stood in one place for hours to see all the marching soldiers seeking public affirmation (Livy 45. 38.12–14). However, those viewers who snagged seats in the Circus or theatres of the Campus Martius may have remained in place all day. The parade covered approximately 3.5 km at a slow pace, causing Cicero to equate listless sauntering with the movement of a *ferculum* (*Off.* 1.36.131; Map 15). Soldiers in lengthy processions might still be moving through the spectator buildings of the Campus when the triumphator reached the Capitoline.

The Forum Boarium was the first significant node encountered within the *pomerium*. Situated at the confluence of several roads and the river, this circulation hub along with the adjacent Forum Holitorium were kept unobstructed by law (*CIL* 6.919, 31574). Here, large displays could join the parade, and the still-fresh paraders perform lively dances. Processing to the south-east, the *pompa triumphalis* entered the enormous Circus Maximus. From the long rows of seats, spectators saw the procession as an animated line extending over 600 meters, a panorama that contrasted with the closer, but visually fragmented, views possible elsewhere in the city. The wide area called out for choreographic changes. Participants in the procession split to pass on either side of the *spina*, or halted to perform complex drills and stage mock battles (Lo Monaco 2008). Numerous simultaneous presentations competed for attention; in one instance viewers rushing from one spot to another may have caused the seating to collapse (cf. *Chron. min.* 146, 148). The depiction of spectators is rare in ancient art, but they frequently appear in

circus scenes where triumphal associations dominated. Booty and arches decorated the Circus Maximus and other ritual events held in theaters and circuses frequently simulated triumphal parades (Figure 30.2) (Juv. 10.36–46; Hor. *Epist.* 2.1.190–93).



Figure 30.2 A magistrate of the games emulates a triumphator processing in a chariot through the Circus Maximus before a large crowd of spectators.

(Image by Marie Saldaña after Étienne Dupérac).

The next significant node lay at the northern end of the valley between the Palatine and Caelian. At this point a major reorganization occurred to accommodate forthcoming challenges. Turning west, the parade route climbed about 10 meters to the top of the Velia before descending into the Forum Romanum through narrow arches. Large floats could not easily navigate the slope or pass through the Arch of Titus erected at the summit around 81 CE. Temporary bleachers and tribunals clogged the open spaces in the Forum beyond; spectators competed for good viewing spots on every available high spot, from balconies to statue podia (Saylor 2008, 124). Before proceeding over the spur, parade organizers diverted unwieldy parade components as well as most of the armed and (by now) drunken soldiers. In the imperial period, they transferred captives and floats to the nearby Flavian Amphitheater (Colosseum), followed by spectators hoping to grab good seats for post-parade games. The reconstituted procession passed into the Forum and halted in front of the Curia (Senate House); from this potent location soldiers led enemy leaders to the nearby prison for execution (Cic. *Verr.* 2.5.77). At some triumphs, a great show was made of wagons filled with captured coins, parting the crowd to lumber across the Forum to the treasury at Saturn's Temple (Livy 34.52).

The *pompa triumphalis* culminated with the triumphator processing up to the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus standing approximately 30 meters above the Forum plaza. Elite spectators in the Comitium fronting the Curia had an excellent view of the general climbing the steep lower Clivus Capitolinus. Julius Caesar made the most of the setting; on the first day of his quadruple triumph in 46 BCE, the dictator ascended flanked by forty elephants carrying lamps (Suet. *Iul.* 37.2). Given the space limitations of the Clivus, the number of animals may be exaggerated, yet the description affirms the exploitation of lighting and smoke for spectacular effect. Other sources describe the

triumphator climbing the hill (more likely the stairs of Jupiter's temple) on his knees and running around the temple three times (Cass. Dio 43.21.2). The steep access, sharp turns, and restricted space of the Capitoline could not accommodate large numbers of wheeled vehicles, displays, or sacrificial beasts (Plut. *Aem.* 33; Künzl 1988, 82). Probably a further restricted group including the triumphator and senior magistrates gathered before Jupiter's temple, waiting in silence until excited shouts indicated the enemy leader had been killed before initiating the solemn rituals (Joseph. *BJ* 7.155). The smoke rising from the Capitoline altar wafted above the city, signaling to all of Rome that the triumphal rite had formally ended. Procession participants and paraphernalia began to disperse.

Numerous festivities followed. Meals, games, plays, and other performances garnered popular support, but blurred the temporal ending of the triumphal rite (Beard 2007, 263–4; Hölscher 2006). Many post-parade events exploited the symbolic associations and logistical advantages of processional nodes. Aemilius Paullus and other triumphators dined with magistrates atop the Capitoline, a strategy that allowed them to avoid traffic congestion in the Forum below (Livy 45.39.13; Beard 2007, 261–2). Segregation of diners by class and gender was common, with the public eating in more accessible venues such as the precinct of Hercules in the Forum Boarium (Ath. 4.153c, 5.221f). In 63 BCE, Lucullus provided banquets throughout the city and surrounding settlements, tying all Romans in the area to the triumph and to Rome (Plut. *Luc.* 37). The Forum's popularity as a high-profile locus for various post-triumph events necessitated the clearing of spectators and displays as soon as the general began to process up the Clivus Capitolinus. After his great triumph, Caesar provided a banquet for the people of Rome with 22,000 couches, probably including seating in the Forum and the Circus Maximus (Plut. *Caes.* 55). In the imperial period, triumphing emperors held exclusive dinners atop the Palatine overlooking the Circus Maximus (Joseph. *BJ* 7.156–7).

The Performance Shapes the City

The landscape and buildings of the capital continuously shaped the *pompa triumphalis* throughout Rome's long history. The exchange was reciprocal. The triumphal parade, in turn, impacted the physical environment of the capital. From the earliest days, ritual processions united and clarified the unruly topography of the city on the Tiber. In addition, the experientially rich and memorable events demanded equally potent architectural responses. Carefully choreographed sequences of dynamic open spaces, eye-catching monuments, dramatic shifts in architectural scale, splashing fountains, notable materials, and patterns of light and shade evoked a ceremonial feeling in all

users (MacDonald 1986). Over the decades, the *pompa triumphalis* wove and reweave the layout, viewsheds, built form, and urban circulation of the great capital.

The logistical requirements of the ritual parade shaped Rome's development. To facilitate the timely conveyance of processional objects, the route of the *pompa triumphalis* relentlessly followed the lowest, flattest ground in the city, with only one notable rise before climbing the Capitoline. Of course the same paths were favored by all heavy transports, but the sacred processions ensured the routes were not compromised over time. The chosen course was also meaningful. It tied together significant individual sites in Rome's early history including the Capitoline and Forum. At the same time, the path underscored the juxtaposition of stream valleys used by traders and plebeians, and the isolated hilltops occupied by the gods, heroes, and the elite that was essential in the formation of Roman urban design and culture. Triumphal parades ensured an ongoing concern with ritual spectatorship in the cityscape. In the late fourth century BCE, the state concretized informal sitting on the slopes of the Palatine and Aventine, erecting the Circus Maximus that provided permanent stone seats for several hundred thousand spectators and isolated the triumphal parade from daily traffic (Livy 8.20).

The triumphal parade continuously promoted urban development – building patrons of all stripes sought maximum notoriety by erecting structures along the course or within its viewshed. In the period between the First and Third Punic Wars, well over half of the temples erected in Rome were located along the path of the triumph, with a heavy concentration in the south-western Campus Martius and Forum Boarium (Favro 1994; Pietilä-Castrén 1987). In the second century BCE, Lucius Stertinius constructed two arches in the Forum Boarium to commemorate Spanish victories even though he didn't apply for a triumph (Livy 33.27; see Sumi, this volume, Chapter 29). The following century, Augustus took steps to concentrate triumphal memory in the Roman Forum. He showcased the *Fasti Triumphales* and added sparkling victory arches at various entry points. Visibility was essential. Rich patrons vied for sites with clear view by both parade participants and spectators. In the dense city, most viewsheds were restricted by buildings covering the sloping hills; the valleys to the south and east of the Palatine, however, offered impressive, directed views. Prominent visual termini attracted the attention of participants in the slow-moving parade, especially that of the triumphator in his elevated chariot. Stertinius erected a third arch at the eastern end of the Circus Maximus, drawing all eyes of the moving participants. To the north, the narrower valley below the Aventine focused sightlines toward Domitian's splashing Meta Sudans; the fountain was not only a potent visual and auditory draw for thirsty paraders, its name and form recalled a circus goal (*meta*) to underscore its experiential role as a turning point for ritual processions.⁴ In the early fourth century CE, Constantine blocked the view of the fountain

with a visually dominating arch. Decorated with elements taken from earlier monuments, the impressive work linked the emperor with favorable predecessors and locales in Rome in an attempt to mitigate its memorialization of a victory celebrated over other Romans (Beard 2007, 324–38).

Like Rome's human residents, the buildings and artworks of Rome were avid spectators and celebrants of the *pompa triumphalis*. In the Forum Boarium, a statue of Hercules donned triumphal garb to watch the parade pass (Plin. *HN* 34.33). Temples were oriented to look out over the city (Vitr. *De arch.* 4.5.2). Hill-top shrines, of course, had the best, most panoramic vistas. The Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus (and the gods within) certainly “watched” the parade with interest, able to clearly see the beginning and end. In the first century BCE, Pompey constructed a temple to Venus Victrix as part of his new theater complex. Situated in a shrine atop the cavea, the building and goddess who brought Pompey victory oversaw the parade participants assembling, processing through the theater, and then entering the city. A few decades later, Augustus honored the god who facilitated his victories by constructing the Temple of Apollo next to his residence on the Palatine at an ideal point to see triumphal parades enter the Circus Maximus (Favro 1996, 209). Even structures and locales with no visual connection to the parade visually joined the festivities. Smoke from temple braziers across the city affirmed the collective commemoration of the event, as did the garlands draped across sculptures of past triumphators.

Collectively, triumphal parades became prescriptive, heavily influencing building form as well as placement in Rome. Architects and patrons drew attention to their structures by providing spectator spaces. The broad stairways and high podia of temples lining streets, such as those of the Republican temples in the Forum Holitorium and Largo Argentina, doubled as audience venues. Porticos provided shade for the crowds, and opportunities for elevated viewing from upper floors and rooftops. Notably, this building type multiplied in concert with the increase in triumphs during the late Republic. The mile-long marble porticos of the Saepta Julia may have been designed specifically for purifying circumambulation by the general, and sun-protected viewing by audiences at post-parade events (Makin 1921, 28–30). The *pompa triumphalis* inspired building adjustments. For example, Augustan designers slightly altered the form and orientation of the theater of Marcellus in the south-western Campus to facilitate the parade passage (Monterroso 2009).

A single building type, the honorific arch, gradually became synonymous with the triumph and its processional pathway, even when not located directly on the route. Easily insinuated into Rome's dense urban fabric, this form had been sporadically used during the Republic to elevate statues memorializing various achievements; placement on or over roads concretized an association

with passage. Augustus enhanced the form's status, erecting numerous impressive examples in the Forum and throughout the city. He carefully exploited a new descriptor – *arcus* – in lieu of the less positive term *fornix* previously used (Mansuelli 1979). Other patrons quickly adopted the form. In an act of self-referential aggrandizement, arches often had decorative reliefs showing a triumphator passing through arches, perhaps indicating the construction of temporary versions during parades. The proliferation of arches eventually led to their devaluation as processional markers. By the second century CE, the decline in competitive building patronage frayed the ties between large victory monuments and the historic pathway; major projects celebrating military success (such as the expansive Forum of Trajan) had no processional or visual connection with the *pompa triumphalis*. Other structures forestalled processional use, except in exceptional instances. The Arch of Septimius Severus dedicated in 203 CE, had stairs across the central opening, necessitating a covering of earth or ramps to allow the passage of parades.

Of course the great triumphal processions of Rome had a major impact on urban circulation. During the event, no heavy transports brought goods to the city center; no other processional events could use the popular, low-lying path around the Palatine. Numerous other normal urban activities ground to a halt. Access to the Forum and Capitoline was possible only from the north and east; the Palatine Hill was almost completely isolated by the continuous ritual flow (Lo Monaco 2008, 76). As each successive triumphator sought to outdo his predecessors with greater eye-boggling displays, bigger donatives, more opulent meals, and elaborate entertainments, the crowds grew. Spectators from Italy and beyond joined the general's troops, captives, and retinue, significantly inflating the population of Rome. The multiple triumphs celebrated by Caesar drew so many visitors that occupiable rooms filled to overflowing; visitors pitched tents along the highways leading into the capital, and even in the city streets. The pressing crowd crushed many people to death, including two senators (Suet. *Iul.* 39).

All live performances occupy a moment in time and then disperse. Participants return home, workers disassemble floats, sacrificed animals are consumed or burned, musical instruments are put away. The Romans ensured the valuation and endurance of the *pompa triumphalis* through repetition, representation, replication, and especially through the undying reciprocal influence between the ceremony and the city. Long after the procession ended, spectators walking through the capital recalled the parade, weaving and reweaving their memories into rich, multivalent narratives that reflected essential collective beliefs. The layout and components of the city, in turn, continuously reflected the influence ritual exerted on urban form. Working in tandem, the procession and city commemorated the culture they both served.

Guide to Further Reading

The Roman triumph has received its fair share of scholarly attention in recent years. Mary Beard's monograph (2007) focuses on literary representations of the triumph (a "ritual in ink"), exploding in the process many modern myths about the triumph and demonstrating how elusive the historical triumph actually is; Itgenshorst (2005) follows a similar approach initially, finding flaws in later imperial accounts of Roman Republican triumphs, and ultimately attempts to locate the triumph in the political culture of Rome (cf. also Bastien 2007). Pittenger (2008) continues this emphasis on the literary triumph by analyzing triumphal debates in the pages of Livy's history as arenas of political contention as a way of illuminating the complexities of senatorial politics in Republican Rome (cf. also Richardson 1976). Scholars have also turned to performance studies and spectacle as useful theoretical frameworks in which to analyze the triumph, increasingly incorporating the consideration of space and topography (Brilliant 1999; Martini 2008; La Rocca 2008; Östenberg 2009; Favro 2014). Several investigators situate the triumph within a broader Roman culture of war continuously evident in Rome's art, buildings, and events (Dillon and Welch 2006). Earlier studies of the Roman triumph are still very useful, focusing principally on questions of its origins (e.g., Versnel 1970; Bonfante Warren 1970; but cf. also Auliard 2001, who analyzes the rules that determined when triumphs were awarded). Künzl (1988) is a striking analysis of the logistics of the triumphal procession. Scholarship has tended to focus on the triumph in the Roman Republic, even though the ceremony persisted until the late empire. We are still lacking, for instance, a monograph on the Roman imperial triumph (cf. McCormick 1986, 1–10). In addition to Beard (2007) and Östenberg (2009), who include the imperial triumph in their discussions of the triumph writ large, see also Balbuza (2002, 2004) for a discussion of the imperial triumph as a means of communicating imperial ideology and its role in strategies of succession (respectively). On the ceremony of the imperial *adventus*, which came to replace the triumph proper, see Lehen (1997) and MacCormack (1972).

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ENDNOTES

Many thanks to Claire Holleran and Fikret Yegül for their patience and advice on this project, and to Marie Saldaña for the drawings and renderings created in the Experiential Technologies Center at the University of California, Los Angeles.

1. Scholarly works in the last five years include: Itgenshorst 2005; Beard 2007; Krasser; Pausch; and Petrovic 2008; Pittenger 2008; La Rocca and Tortonella 2008; Östenberg 2009; and Popkin 2016. Popular interpretations include a performance piece by Gissen 2010, a novel by Saylor 2008, and a television series; Papazian 2009; and Popkin 2016.
2. The title of *triumphator* has not been documented before the second century CE: Beard 2007, 62–3; Östenberg 2009, 48–9.
3. Martini (2008, 77–9) situates the triumphators' podium on the north-eastern side of the Porticus Octaviae.
4. Beard 2007, 185–6. Domitian may have erected the fountain in part to compensate for partially obstructing the valley's viewshed with a towering aqueduct serving the Palatine.

PART X

RECEPTIONS OF ROME

CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE

Written Rome: Ancient Literary Responses

Diana Spencer

Yes, that's the case, Varro. For when we were in our very own city yet still wandering and straying as if strangers, it was your books, so to speak, that led us home, so that we were at last able to recognize who and where we were.

(Cicero, *Academica* 1.9)

City life and cityscapes have proved uniquely fascinating to authors and thinkers right up to the present day. Sometimes threatening, disgusting, polluting or corrupting, cities are always exciting and interesting: its Capital City in particular remains a benchmark for the vitality and power of a nation. The stab of recognition that one might feel on contemplating the Romes of Livy, Ovid, or Juvenal is a complex pleasure, already on display in Cicero, as this chapter's epigraph shows. As a "family romance" for Western civilization, "Rome" feeds into contemporary thinking on what cities represent and what their role should be (Barkan 1991, 16, on Freud's Roman fantasies), coloring attempts to recuperate an ancient experience of the dialogue between city and text. Rome becomes a (literary) personality which breathes life into the imagined world of classical antiquity – or the *imaginaires* of authors eager to take part in (re)constructing the cityscape – and adds nuance and vitality to the real city's monumental fragments, landscapes, lost sites and vistas.

When we allow ancient authors to fuel our enthusiasm for the turbulent street-politics of the late Republic, or to guide us through the city's imperial grandeur, we are treading a well-worn path (as Part IX of this volume demonstrates). Roberts (2001) shows just how quickly the idea of Rome became a trope for analyzing political and cultural change. Indeed, a growth in interest in the classical cityscape (and its ongoing emblematic significance) was already a commonplace when, in 1347, the Roman revolutionary, Cola di Rienzo, attempted to renew Rome's empire. He was, the story goes, fuelled by the volatile combination of the ruinous remains of Rome's former greatness and the imaginary, textual, world of Rome's great figures. The poet Petrarch, one of his early admirers, sent him a reading guide to his "Virgilian" fifth

bucolic poem to ensure that its encoded commentary on modern Rome's moral ruin came across loud and clear, and writing to his friend Giacomo Colonna (*Rerum familiarium* 6.2; see Curran, [Chapter 32](#) in this volume), Petrarch vividly conjures up a walk through a Rome whose echoes of former grandeur immersed its fans in a politically charged dialogue between past and present.

Petrarch's imaginary topography and deictic use of "here" and "there" draws heavily on the tour of Rome's future site (*Aen.* 8.337–61) scripted by Virgil. There, as Aeneas marveled at the landscape conjured up by Evander, Virgil's audience looked forward (as Petrarch's looked back) to the monumental, cosmopolitan city (Spencer 2010, 50–54), and written Rome still challenges us to dig out its storied marvels and mnemonic nuances. Petrarch noted that, far from disappointing his expectations, his rich, literary, personal mental map of Rome meant that visiting the ruinous city "has diminished nothing, it has magnified it all" (*Rerum familiarium* 2.14; cf. Freud 1953, 193–7).

Ancient literary responses to Rome have helped secure its central position in Western subjectivity. Adapting an approach used to great effect by Diane Favro (1996, 24–41, 252–80), I propose an imaginary stroll through some key sites, giving a flavor of how authors have excavated, backfilled, and laid new foundations over urban space to create a density of meaning that reflects the political weight and cultural value loaded onto Rome (cf. Schmitzer 1999). This involves thinking about how and why particular descriptive flavors or literary genres produce flexible visions of the city, responsive to individual and collective needs and interests, and takes us on a walking tour of a city already "all about" a sense of collective or social memory, even in the late Republic, when literary treatments first caught the imagination of citizens (most of whom, of course, were not Rome-born) and travelers alike (Edwards 1996, 16–18).

Rather like the systematization of memory set out in the anonymous *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (3.29–30, 32), geared towards the tricks used by orators to remember and structure a speech, Rome's physical sites become a set of pegs upon which (armchair-)travelers and citizens alike hang their personal and collective recollections and meanings (Short 2008). Connecting these *loci* or "iconic emplacements" (Soja 1996, 249) into a route of one's own creates an ever-changing multiplicity of Romes mapped against a historical continuum and serving a range of agendas, e.g. the deployment of "Republican" Rome in the imperial era (Gowing 2005, 132–59). This urban markup puts us in the footsteps of the orators and politicians for whom scripting the city was the organizing principle behind their public speech, and therefore their authority as citizens.

Entering a City of Texts: The Via Flaminia

Our tour commences on the late third-century BCE Via Flaminia, facing south towards the city walls (see Map 4). Entering Rome from the north, we will eventually exit to the south, via the Porta Capena. Standing in the modern Piazza del Popolo with our backs to the obelisk (brought to Rome from Egypt by Augustus, in 10 BCE, and originally erected in the Circus Maximus), we gaze down the modern Via del Corso along the Flaminia's original route (we may also be jostling for space with aficionados of Dan Brown's (2000) novel *Angels and Demons*, which visits the piazza – another literary accretion).

Literary iconiCITY (Favro 2006) gathered momentum when late Republican Rome became the stage for increasingly vivid and violent struggles between groups and individuals who recognized the political potential in forging a link between themselves, their success, the idea of the city, and its physical fabric (Edwards 1996, 20–23; de Chaisemartin 2003; Lowrie 2003; Wallace-Hadrill 2008, 259–312). Writing to his friend Atticus about the deals being brokered (*Att.* 1.1.2), Cicero notes that one of the candidates for the consulship of 64 BCE could make significant electoral capital from his position as the Via Flaminia's official curator. Augustus chose to note his work on this road ("I made it...", *feci*) as a highlight of his seventh Consulship (*Res Gestae Divi Augusti* 20.5), and Suetonius follows this association: the Flaminia was the road that Augustus chose personally to restore (*Aug.* 30.1). Later, Juvenal (1.170–71) mischievously promises to sink his teeth primarily into those (wealthy and well-connected enough to be) buried in the wayside tombs that once advertised family success to passersby (Gowing 2005, 12–14).

Strolling down the Corso, we need to imagine ourselves walking back in time into a region dedicated to exercise, leisure, and honing one's public image (Wiseman 1993; on the landscaped estates that embraced this region, Spencer 2010, 142–70). Juvenal's snarky allusion makes a useful corrective reminder that streets (and entertainment districts) often stage less high-minded or even insalubrious city scenes. This elevated highway crossed lush, low-lying level ground – the River Tiber's flood-plain – the Campus (field) of Mars (mythically the father of the city's founder, Romulus). The toponym points up the legendary quality that Rome's sites often evoke. Numinosity filters into Livy's cautious re-telling of Romulus's apotheosis from a swampy spot (Palus Capreae) in the Campus (1.16.1; cf. *Ov. Fast.* 2.491–6). More prosaically, Livy's annalistic history also "remembers" the region's regal backstory – originally property of the Tarquins, famously Rome's last royal family (2.5.2). By the mid-first century BCE, interest in the Campus's shift from royal to public space may also underlie a discourse of "encroachment" by those hoping to annex it to their own ends (e.g. *Cic. Att.* 13.33a: "the Tiber is being diverted...the Campus Martius is being built up...It's what Caesar wants"). This trend becomes a trope in Augustus's reported boast that he "found a city of brick and left a city of marble" (*Suet. Aug.* 28.3). Going one better than just

inscribing his name on building projects, Augustus's ambitious remodeling of Rome transformed the cityscape itself into a monumental text expressing a story of power (Zanker 1988, 18–25; Favro 1996, 79–142; Rehak 2006).

Even tight design is no guarantee that the approved interpretation will stick. Describing the temptations a girl needs to resist when waiting for her soldier-man, Horace (65–8 BCE) sets a different Campus scene:

...no other man rides a horse so skillfully
it seems, in the grassy Campus,
and none so swiftly
swims the Tuscan river

(Hor. *Carm.* 3.7.25–8)

Horace's lyric reflects the Campus's use as a military exercise ground, but the context, a kind of love poem, is already deconstructing what the city/Campus nexus means – and thus also the ideal citizen-soldier (cf. Hor. *Carm.* 1.8; Leach 1994), whose womenfolk ogle Horace's sexy athlete while he slogs on campaign. Even outside the witty artifice of lyric (or elegy), citizens attempting to keep the civic and martial flavor intact were already jostling with the beginnings of urban sprawl and changing priorities for exercise. Inevitably, Juvenalian satire takes this "degradation" of the Campus as civic space to its (il)logical extreme with the credulous wife who traverses the Campus on bleeding knees as the narrator switches her allegiance from one foreign deity (Cybele) to another (Isis) (6.522–9).

A precursor to Juvenal (and to Horace's jaundiced and melancholy comments), with some of the same flavor but more acerbity, is Cicero's sarcastic swipe at his adversary Clodia's scopophilia, and worse, when defending M. Caelius Rufus against a murder charge: "You have an estate on the Tiber. You deliberately chose it for its location, that's where all the young men come to swim. You can pick up the catch-of-the-day there whenever you like..." (Cic. *Cael.* 36). This schtick plays (for forensic effect) upon anxieties about the disappearance of civic significance from the Campus: "When I was a boy", Cicero comments, "we used the Campus as an exercise and training ground, clad just in tunics" (*Cael.* 11), and probably reflects conservative elite concern that political change was creating a feedback loop with changes in the cityscape and use of space.

Playing with the idea that his vast history of Rome has a physically "monumental" quality (Jaeger 1997), Livy follows up the consecration of the Campus to Mars with a quirky story that exemplifies the city-as-text motif. The exiled Tarquins' final crop was harvested and discarded into the sluggish midsummer Tiber; the grain piled up, gathered other water-borne detritus, and

in this way formed an island: Tiber Island. Later, construction work made it “sufficiently raised and solid enough to support even temples and porticoes” (2.5.4). Through a combination of politics, serendipity, piety, technical skill and hard work, Livy grows “this” Rome organically from its historical topography.

The first, must-see political monument, already visible as we contemplate these Campus stories, is Augustus’s Mausoleum (Zanker 1988, 72–7; Davies 2000, 13–19; Rehak 2006, 31–61); references to its landscaped setting (Suet. *Aug.* 100.3–4) hint at Augustus’s ability to guarantee harmony between citizen and nature (Spencer 2010, 155–7). Theatrically positioned to take advantage of the sloping ground between the Via Flaminia and the Tiber, the Mausoleum put what would become Augustus’s new cityscape in an imperial family context. It lures the traveler off the main road into a “subplot” of Augustus-themed sights (Favro 1996, 209), and ancient authors explore similar ideas (e.g. Verg. *Aen.* 6.872–4; Strabo 5.3.8). Strabo’s visitor’s perspective touched on Roman technical skill in engineering hydraulics and road-building, and then moved on to comment on the difference between early Rome (defined by practical considerations) and the contemporary city: a place remarkable for its beauty, and (implicitly) the canniness of enterprising political builders (Duret and Néraudau 2001, 329–31).

In fact, Pompey, the Deified Caesar, Augustus, his sons and friends, and wife and sister, have outdone all others in their enthusiasm for and expenditure on buildings. ... [the Campus] easily affords space simultaneously for chariot-races, other equestrian activities, and all the exercise-taking crowds ...; and that’s before we consider the works of art ... and the year-round grassy ground, and the summits of those hills that slope down to the river (just like a stage-set) – a spectacle that one can hardly leave. ...with numerous colonnades, and sacred precincts, and three theaters, an amphitheater, and lavish temples, all jostling close so together they seem to be a city in themselves, to which the rest of the city stands just as an accessory [...description of the Mausoleum...]. And again, if, on passing to the “old” Forum, you saw one forum after another competing for attention, the basilicas, colonnades and temples, the Capitolium and the works of art both there and at the Palatine and Livia’s Promenade, you would easily forget that anything else existed. Such is Rome (Strabo 5.3.8; adapted).

Strabo’s world geography addressed a Greek speaking audience, most of whom might never visit Rome itself (Wiseman 1979; Van der Vliet 2003). Strabo probably spent fifteen or so years at Rome (from 44 BCE), and “his” Campus Martius characterizes – and even replaces – the intramural “Republican” city. The major political families (Caesar was once Pompey’s father-in-law) are written into a building program that radically changed the

approach to the city and one's preconceptions on arrival, making this *the* route into the city. A traveler after Strabo would find it impossible to "see" the older, more straightforwardly Republican sites uncompromised by the scripted expectation of colorful, gleaming, new edifices marking the start of the city. By making the Campus the main event, with its structures the must-see attractions, Strabo transforms the traditional urban landscape (still waiting within the Servian Walls) into a sideshow. A new kind of story about Rome is being developed, in which the designed city becomes a performance text aimed at the outside world.

Towards Pompey's Entertainment Complex

Rather than stepping off the road at the Mausoleum to stroll in its gardens, or to read the posthumous monumental inscription of Augustus's achievements (*Res Gestae Diui Augusti*, the ultimate text/site nexus), let's carry on a little, to the processional reliefs on the Ara Pacis. Their imaginary ceremonial "movement" might evoke Ovid's verse-calendar entry for 30 January, when his song (*carmen*) leads him (*deduco*) to the altar (*Fast.* 1.709–24). A personification of Pax, hair garlanded in Actian leaves, makes this site all about a global destiny for Rome ("*primus et ultimus orbis*"), rooted in hybridity – Trojan blood and Roman soil (*terra*). Ovid closes the month with a vision of the priests adding incense to the flames as a white beast is sacrificed so that Augustus and his family, transformed metaphorically into a "house" (*domus*), may guarantee peace by enduring forever.

With the smoke still stinging our eyes, we stroll into increasingly dense urban space, closer to the city proper. As we leave behind the parkland, Mausoleum, and Ara Pacis, our view west is dominated by a complex of leisure facilities including Rome's first permanent theater (and its attached porticus), dedicated by Pompey in 55 BCE (Temelini 2006). Hot and dusty from our travels, a brief visit to one of the baths might seem ideal – but ideally not one of those frequented by literary moralists and satirists (Fagan 2002, 12–39). Louche behavior, and worse, is commonplace at the baths, e.g. Cic. *Cael.* 61–9 (cf. Plin. *Ep.* 3.4.6–8); more generally, Ov. *Ars Am.* 3.639–40 (cf. Sen. *Dial.* 7.7.3, 10.12.7; Plin. *HN* 14.139–40; Juv. 6.418–32). A wonderful example, collecting up an array of the ideas we've been exploring, is Martial 2.14: a send-up of Silius, a ligger who will do anything for a dinner invitation (Prior 1996). The poem's relentlessly rapid-fire allusion and speedy transition from site to site hint at this region's developing high-density urban texture.

Silius's hunt takes him on a circuit where barbed irony attaches to the legendary associations invoked en route (Europa, Chiron (Phillyrides), Achilles, Jason, Io, and Aeolus). Disappointed at the Porticus of Europa (sponsored by Agrippa's sister) he wends his way to the Saepta Julia (Caesar

started the rebuild, Agrippa completed it; Plin. *HN* 36.29 talks up the art). He hangs around the temple of Lady Memphis (Isis), then on to the Hecatostylon and Pompey's Porticus. No luck anywhere. Finally, after stalking lucklessly through various bath-houses, "he scurries back to Europa's warm box-grove" (Mart. 2.14.15) to see what he might have missed. The critical, satirical tone in the baths' literary reception seems at odds with their cultural role showcasing Roman engineering and civilization, but we'll return to this later. For us, recalling this discourse of insalubrity is useful as we pass by Agrippa's magnificent health and fitness center: the whiff of naughtiness and scandal primes us for similarly salacious responses to Pompey's entertainment complex.

The theater and circus were notorious pick-up joints – we need to keep this in mind as we stroll farther away from the main road; citizens were prohibited from acting on stage, actors were imagined to have minimal morals, and a certain infamy attended the spaces by association. Yet despite or perhaps because of this, (amphi-)theaters are a major literary attraction. Authors enjoy using them as stage-sets for seedy goings-on, or uncitizenlike behavior. Cicero (*Off.* 2.60), for example, makes sarcastic capital of Pompey's wasted "generosity" in choosing to build a theater, colonnade and temple (benefitting primarily himself, is the implication) rather than sponsoring some more practical public work. Pompey's theater itself is less vividly popular with authors (for mostly throwaway examples: Cic. *Pis.* 65; Augustus, *Res Gestae Diui Augusti* 20.1; Plin. *HN* 7.158, 8.20; Plut. *Pomp.* 52; Tert. *De Spect.* 10), than the Porticus, which becomes a popular poetic haunt. Propertius comments sharply that if Cynthia wants forgiveness she must agree not to stroll, tarted up, in Pompey's "shady" colonnade (4.8.75). Catullus, probably writing not long after its opening (and perhaps forty or so years before Propertius), sets a more ostentatiously melancholy but also playfully hyperbolic tone (55.6–12) when he recounts a search for a friend in the Porticus walks. He asked all the "girlies" (*femellae*) he encountered there to help him find Camerius, to no avail.

Although one might read this as a comment on the good-time girls (or open prostitution) sheltered by the colonnades (Edwards 1996, 23; Juv. 6.60–62), the versified *fânerie* suggests an alternative: having checked out a set of magnificent and even sometimes intellectual locales (the Campus, Circus, bookshops, Temple of Jupiter) the poet's conversation with these "girlies" becomes at least in part a skit on the female statues (another shot of urban "culture", put to slightly perverse effect) that adorned the Porticus. "Give me my Camerius, you vile girls!" says the poet; "Oh look, he's hiding here between my rosy breasts!" is the snappy retort. The bared bosom the "girl" shows off evokes the iconography of scantily clad garden ornament: a "talking" Venus, perhaps, or a likeness of a famous courtesan (Kuttner 1999, 351). Is Catullus sending up the décor, or giving a mock-mythic flavor to the

supposed prostitutes by mixing them up with Pompey's "serious" marble women? Pinning down one meaning is impossible, but it's likely that Catullus was giving a saucy twist to the general's crowd-pleasing public gift, notionally all about imperial success.

A particularly lovely evocation of the somatic delights of this "shady colonnade" makes it "famed for Attalian cloth of gold" (Pergamene tapestries), with walks edged by "dense ranks of soaring planes" (a "natural" colonnade), and tinged with a mythological flavor that adds a sense of quiet mystery (Prop. 2.32.11–13). The description is both quirky and suggestive. Oriental hangings conjure up Pompey's triumphs in the east, but also the decay that Romans loved to associate with luxurious monarchies. The combination of shade, plane trees, deities, and water suggests an artfully conceived *locus amoenus* – this is a space that hints at civilized Rome's sophisticated delight in the fantasy of a rustic idyll, and recalls Roman fascination with the city's pastoral origins (Edwards 1996, 59; Spencer 2010, 16–30). Its water-feature comes to life:

the streams that pour from slumbering Maro
and gently, as splashing nymphs [*lympphae*], flow throughout the city
before all at once Triton sucks back the water

(Prop. 2.32.11–16).

"Maro" (Virgil's cognomen) simultaneously evokes the poet who re-founded Rome as an epic city, and the identically named priest of Apollo and son of Dionysus (Antony's favored god) who spends the sunny days drunkenly asleep (Hom. *Od.* 9.196–215; Eur. *Cyc.*). Kuttner (1999, 357) teases out these references, whilst Zanker (1988, 44–65) tracks Octavian's deconstruction of Antony's propaganda.

Martial's satirical verses continue to enjoy marking up the Porticus disparagingly as a place where idlers hang out (11.1.11) and where tempting women make life hard for the "virtuous" (11.47.3), but even by the time Ovid composed his *Ars Amatoria* these tropes compromised the discursive qualities of "imperial" redevelopment. To hunt girls successfully:

Just amble slowly beneath Pompey's shade,
when the sun advances on the back of Hercules' lion;
or where to her son's gifts the mother added
more: lavish works of foreign marble.
And nor should that Portico be missed, strewn with Old Masters,
which takes the name of its founder: Livia;

or where the daring granddaughters of Belus prepare the death of their
unfortunate cousins

and their stern father stands with drawn sword

(Ov. *Ars Am.* 1.67–74).

Tick off the key features – shade, a gentle stroll – and enjoy the richly connective quality of the scripted city. Ovid’s monuments jostle in over-neighborly proximity that distorts their real locations and proportions: his map-guide to urban seduction makes it difficult not to elide the physical and semiotic distance between Pompey’s gardens, the duo of Marcellus’s Theater and Octavia’s Porticus at the southern end of the Campus, and Livia’s nearby Porticus. The Campus held more porticoes than these, but Ovid immortalizes and binds together these three in particular, inviting a reading where even the highest political and intellectual aspirations (piety, imperial booty, art) are undercut by urban practicalities, the popular imagination, commerce, and the unruliness of myth. Livia’s Porticus in turn “suggests” Apollo’s Palatine temple (our next stop; Miller 2009, 185–252); its decorative “Danais” providing a stern warning – or call-to-arms depending on one’s point of view.

The Palatine Gaze

These authors’ urban itineraries draw us into stories that explore how places fit together and what particular combinations mean (Edwards 1996, 42–3; Spencer 2010, 47–61). Rather than viewing Ovid’s segue as a spatial distortion, we should follow his lead. To stroll from Livia’s Porticus to the top of the Palatine might, in real time, take fifteen minutes, but when we gaze up at Ovid’s verse Danais, we already probably “see” them through a Propertian filter’s mythic parameters and falling empires:

...Phoebus’ golden

colonnade was opened by mighty Caesar:

so great a sight, laid out with Punic columns,

among them old Danaus’ host of women

(Prop. 2.31.1–4).

Propertius encourages visitors and passers-by to read against the grain of Augustus’s association with both the hill and Rome itself. This poem complicates the Palatine’s new role as an embodiment of (imperial) family values (Edwards 1996, 33). Augustus’ transformation of the Palatine into a personal site of power recalls Cicero’s emblematic use of this hill on his

return from exile, to denounce the political collapse he perceived in the Republic. One reason why designed sites and the urban fabric of Rome became so susceptible to semiotic land-grab by ambitious men was that Romans imagined the family house (*domus*) to be central to a citizen's public image (Wiseman 1987). In a speech dating back to 57 BCE, Cicero equates the restoration of his property rights with his ability to function as the Republic's main defender:

For if you reinstate me in my house...I will recognize myself as having been restored; ... My house holds the gaze of practically the whole city: if it remains there not as the city's monument but as its tomb, inscribed with a hostile name [i.e. P. Clodius Pulcher's], then all that is left is for me to emigrate rather than to live in a city where before my eyes were erected trophies over myself and the Republic. [...] For the most significant and well-known parts of the city are confronted by not a monument but a wound upon our country.

(Cic. *Dom.* 100, 146)

Cicero's *domus*, demolished by Clodius, stands in for the whole city (*Dom.* 101; Roller 2010 broadly outlines this topos). Later, Cicero seems to exhort his audience to patriotic violence against the ersatz Porticus erected by Clodius in its place: only Clodius's canny dedication of a temple to Liberty as part of the redevelopment (103) saves him in turn from exile-by-demolition. Cicero sarcastically asks whether lady Liberty herself realized that her deal with Clodius would end with her imprisonment alongside the Republican values that she represents (cf. *Dom.* 108–12, 116; Edwards 1993, 150–72 introduces the issues).

Although the Palatine was the legendary site of Rome's foundation, before Augustan redevelopment its role in the literary city is more diffuse (see Varro *Ling.* 5.53; Zehnacker 2008; Spencer 2011). Prominent in Virgil (*Aen.* 8) as Greek emigré Evander's pastoral home, its "rustic" charms crop up again and again in authors choosing to play with tropes of nostalgia (e.g. Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 1.79.11; Livy 5.53.8; Prop. 4.1.1–10; Stat. *Silv.* 2.3). This obsession with binding Rome's past, present and future into one synchronous cityscape has a physical focus in the Palatine library founded by Augustus as part of his Apollo-plex (Mart. 7.17, although not about this library, makes a vivid case for the interdependence of the book and its location in a library when assessing the likelihood of literary immortality. See Spencer 2003 on "the power of the book"; White 2009). A slew of self-conscious poems such as Ovid *Tristia* 1.1, 3.1 (Neumeister 1993, 109–10, 113; Newlands 1997, 57–79; Miller 2002, 129–39; Huskey 2006), 3.7, and Martial 1.70, 10.19, 12.2(3), in various ways walk their "books" through itineraries that get their meaning here (Geyssen 1999; cf. Gilula 1991, 245–7).

Time presses. The Clivus Victoriae brings us briskly downhill to the

Velabrum, where we pick up with Propertius (4.9.5–6) and Ovid (*Fast.* 6.405–14), both musing on the once-flooded site’s now dry land, and on into the Forum Boarium (e.g. Varro, *Ling.* 5.43–4, 6.24). Standing somewhere near the south end of the Vicus Iugarius, let’s turn onto the Vicus Tuscus. Again, choices: with Livy, we could move away from the city center to experience the screams and mayhem of the Sabine women’s abduction at the Circus (1.9; cf. Ov. *Ars Am.* 1.101–32 (makes “theater” the setting); *Fast.* 3.189–228), or flicking forward to the war against Hannibal, we could postpone our departure by following Livy’s apotropaic procession of unmarried girls as they loop through the Porta Carmentalis and into prime civic (and ritual) space, before marching back out to the Aventine (Vicus Iugarius–Forum–Vicus Tuscus–Velabrum–Forum Boarium–Clius Publicius), hoping to complete a sacrifice commenced by married women, and to save Rome (27.37; this circuit echoes Virgil’s “tour” (*Aen.* 8)).

Gazing at the Circus valley, the complexly palimpsestic qualities of Roman textual space are vividly realized: we can experience chariot races perhaps on the very spot, the story goes, where Romulus orchestrated the abduction of the Sabine women who made Rome a viable community. The semiotic mashup of sex, violence, patriotism and competition ticked the boxes that, for elegists and satirists, gave weight and bite to their city-mapping. Rome’s ludic potential flickers on behind Ovid’s erotic fascination with the Circus (e.g. *Am.* 3.2). Testing one’s mettle at the Games of Love counterpoints the kinds of militaristic competition that events in the circus or arena might originally have sublimated (Henderson 2002), and supplants them as a spectacle.

Strolling north, perhaps with Propertius 4.2 (or Varro, *Ling.* 5.46) on the Vicus Tuscus, picking up the multidirectional qualities of Ovid *Fasti* 6.401–14 (where archaic Rome’s legendary wateriness links the Forum and Circus Maximus) we reach...

The Forum Point-of-View

We might, in fact, have joined Ovid’s book and reversed its steps from Palatine to Forum (*Tr.* 3.1; Huskey 2006). Whilst Ovid (like Varro, *Ling.* 5.41) is interested in Rome as a city of hills (*Tr.* 3.7.49–52), he keeps his book’s “feet” firmly marching towards possible shelves – and primarily the Palatine library. Yet despite the route, probably from the NE (perhaps the Argiletum), Ovid “changes the appearance of the Forum without moving a single stone” (Huskey 2006, 23) by eliding landmarks relating directly to Caesar and Augustus (cf. his nostalgic deployment of the Campus, *Pont.* 1.8.33–8; Knox 2009, 661–4). Instead of earning brownie points by talking up (e.g.) the Curia Julia, newish Rostra, Basilica Julia, or Temple of Deified Caesar, Ovid instead primes his book mnemohistorically when he preps it for

the Palatine by remarking on the Temple of Vesta and the Regia – two particularly venerable buildings, both exempt from Augustan make-over (Huskey 2006, 19). Vesta's temple keeps the Palladium safe (Pallas winks etymologically towards the Palatine; Spence 1999), whilst the "humble little" (3.1.30) palace of Numa piquantly counterpoints the god-worthy marvels of Augustus's House on the Hill, its doorposts agleam with honorary arms (Ov. *Tr.* 3.1.33–4). Ovid's hindsight reviews the best-of-all-possible Romes with one eye on the view from above, but also implicitly encourages those commanding the heights to be(a)ware of what high visibility represents, from (the Forum) below.

Making Rome fit for an emperor (and vice versa) comes full circle in Ammianus Marcellinus's description of Constantius II's entry into Rome (Vout 2007, 311–13). Ammianus writes the city into magnificent but also self-consciously "late" existence as a function of the emperor's unfamiliar gaze (16.10.13–17). Ammianus describes Constantius entering the Forum, and rotating 360° (at the Rostra), finding himself dazzled by the marvels: framed by "the seven hills", but also defined by the sights that commanded the summits or (significantly) whose vast scale made them seem like more than simply urban monuments or individual structures. Ironically, Ammianus earlier observed that Constantius had planned to make his Roman visit "triumphal", entering on the Via Flaminia – instead, the city's potent iconography conquers him. Stand-out sites include the "immortal" Capitoline Temple of Jupiter, baths scaled like whole provinces, the (Flavian) amphitheater (with eye-defying heights), the Pantheon (like a city region in itself)—and Pompey's Theater (although not e.g. Augustus's Forum) too gets name-checked. Eventually, Ammianus (and Constantius) reach Trajan's Forum (accept no substitutes...): unique, indescribable, inimitable (Gowing 2005, 149–51).

The Forum sets the scene for Constantius's avid consumption of Rome's grandeur, and we see that fourth-century historiography is as complexly nostalgic for "ancient" Rome as Petrarch. For (Ammianus's) Constantius, even Fame could never adequately prepare one for Rome's awe-inspiring "reality", but the "reality" here is as heritage theme-park (this was Constantius's only visit): a document of permanence achieved through adaptability to circumstance. The Forum starts as a kind of panopticon encircled by all the must-see sites, but Constantius looks to the Circus Maximus (i.e. a site not in a Forum sight-line) when planning his mark on the city: an obelisk, echoing Augustan monuments to Rome's control of Egypt (17.4). The uneasy dialogue between emperors, Forum and Circus tacitly straddles the Palatine, and also counterpoints Strabo's de-centering of the Forum and the traditional political topography. Here, the interplay between emperors, topography, myth, and history is what generates Rome's unique standing as (a memorial to its former status as) eternal imperial cosmopolis.

We “entered” the Forum with Ovid along the Sacra Via; leaving, we might stroll along Via Nova (by the time it features in texts, “New Street” is, of course, one of Rome’s oldest: Varro, *Ling.* 6.59. Livy 1.41.4 brands it as Tarquinius Priscus’s address) before turning south along the Via Ostiensis, and joining the Via Appia.

Last Exit to...

The Via Appia (312 BCE) takes us south from Rome, towards the Hellenized world of Magna Graecia. All sorts of authors find it interesting – from Strabo (5.3.9) through to Statius, who tags it as “queen of the super-highways” (an aside, when praising Domitian’s new Via Domitiana: *Silv.* 2.2.12). It’s the route to Brundisium taken by Horace (*Sat.* 1.5) and from the historian Appian we hear that 6,000 of the survivors of Spartacus’s revolt were crucified along the stretch between Rome and Capua (*B Civ.* 1.120). Travelling to Brundisium (as Spartacus was aiming to do) one takes one’s life in one’s hands (literally: the Appia was, as Horace memorably recounts, passing through the dreaded (malarial) Pontine Marshes). Like the Via Flaminia, our route into the city, the Appia too was lined with monumental tombs, advertising family success-stories: the tomb of the Scipios was the mnemonic star-attraction (e.g. Cic. *Arch.* 22, cf. Livy 38.56.4; Jaeger 1997, 167–8; Hales 2000, 48). In Juvenal 3, “shady” (*umbra*) Umbricius, bitterly xenophobic, plans an escape to Cumae (Larmour 2007, 191–202). The satirist and emigrant swap notes at the Porta Capena, and this gate’s later reappearance (Juvenal 8 rebrands it as the Porta Idymaea, highlighting the corrupting power of foreign semiotics) suggests that Juvenal is keen to make a point about it (Larmour 2007, 202–10).

In the gate’s first, extended appearance in Juvenal (3.10–20) it’s the stage for Umbricius’s loathing-filled rant on the urban decay he perceives around him. Cicero made it clear that one’s house is oneself, concretized in the urban fabric; here Umbricius’s entire house (again, *domus*) is stacked up onto one cart (3.10), and as the “house” is dismantled, Umbricus self-de(con)structs by the ancient arches and dank (*madidus*) Capena Gate. In section 3 we noted literary interest in playing up the legendary wateriness of early Rome. The charming vision of boats scudding across the cityscape is probably more fantasy than reality. Nevertheless, concern about Rome’s potential to deliquesce may underlie these literary lakes and pools (Spencer 2007, 86–9), and also Roman fascination with the mastery of hydraulics (Gowers 1995; Purcell 1996; Malissard 2002; Aldrete 2007. Cf. Strabo 5.3.8; Plin. *HN* 36.121–3; Frontin. *Aq.* 1.9). Vitruvius (*De Arch.* 8) is also intensely interested in water-control (McEwen 2003, 48, 88), but although shifting and engineering water to the growing cosmopolis are tagged as key Roman skills, authors also enthuse about the ideally hydrated site the city occupies (Cic.

Rep. 2.11; cf. *Frontin. Aq.* 1.4). When we see Umbricius and his interlocutor outlined against the damp stonework it seems likely that Juvenal is also alluding snidely to the famous Aqua Appia (312 BCE), which emerged here from its underground course (*Frontin. Aq.* 5.5; cf. *Mart.* 3.47.1. Stambaugh 1988, 129 maps the aqueducts). In transforming this early showpiece of Roman ingenuity and ability to confine nature into a leaky conduit – the backdrop for a journey into the heart of what’s wrong with Rome and its departure from a solid, foundational ideal – Juvenal hints that even the water feels no desire to remain a Roman ally.

From here, the narrator and Umbricius descend into Egeria’s Valley, where our sense of what to expect (honed by Virgil, Propertius, Livy, *et al.*) is brought up short – the once god-haunted idyll is only schlock antique, complete with ostentatiously “fake” caves. The poem promises to take a more familiar turn when it time-shifts briefly into the early Roman world of Numa, but although his one-night stand Egeria (*amica*) recalls the urbane world of erotic elegy, his imagined pastoral-cityscape (complete with grove, shrine, and sacred spring) is quickly soured in bile. Now, the Jews have taken over (we hear), and with the Camenae (Latin “Muses”: standing in for authentic citizens) ejected (3.20) and the trees no longer paying their way, this evocative spot is touting its charms. Like Romulus’s swampy apotheosis, or the early Roman Curtius’s city-saving Underworld plunge into a (dampish) Forum chasm (*lacus*) (Livy 7.6.1–6), Umbricius heads for Cumae (the world of gods and shades) via a well-lubricated exit.

Conclusion

Varro’s lost antiquarian work *Antiquitates Rerum Humanarum* would have been an obvious place to start hunting for esoteric traces of textual Rome, had some accident of history not intervened. Nevertheless, his interest in how the physical city related to the history of the citizen-body and the increasing success of the state (*res publica*) was hugely influential in antiquity (our epigraph shows the emotional quality of the citizen–city bond, one which conservatives feared was being diluted by immigration and imperialism). For Varro, authors preserve Rome from the destructive force of imperfect memory or the ruinous effects of time. We see this urge to describe and explain at work in his *de Lingua Latina*. Rome’s cityscape shapes Varro’s archaeological understanding of linguistics and speech as guarantors of a shared identity, at a time when sharing a common language and idiom can no longer be taken for granted (Spencer 2011). Writing Rome into existence acts, for Varro, as a control and reflection of citizen identity’s shifting paradigms. Varro’s “conservative” agenda, then, also “conserves” what those who share “our” language value. As we noted initially, this enthusiasm for scripting the city

coincides with a time of intense cultural and political change, and the authors with whom we strolled through the city also gradually built up a sense that Rome was most vividly itself when imagined from the outside looking in. Leaving Rome we are *also* retracing an emotionally charged route – in 1944 the Allied forces entered Rome on the Via Appia (Malaparte 1988, 276–7, 289–306 explores classical resonances in this choice of road), and passed through the city as “victors” and liberators, parading north along the Corso (our route in reverse).

Guide to Further Reading

The go-to monograph on “written” Rome is Edwards (1996); Larmour and Spencer (2007a) survey the issues and major scholarship, introducing Larmour and Spencer (2007b), which presents detailed text-based studies of e.g. Livy, Ovid, Tacitus (who got squeezed out of this stroll, but might well have guided aspects!), and Juvenal. Rea (2007) concentrates on Tibullus, Virgil, and Propertius, and the Palatine and Capitoline Hills. Miller (2007) characterizes elegy and satire as the two quintessential urban genres; Green (2004, briefly) and Welch (2005, more extensively) home in on the specific relationship between urban fabric and elegiac poet. On Rome in other genres: historiography, e.g. Livy: Jaeger (1997); biography, e.g. Plutarch: Banta (2007); oratory, e.g. Cicero: Vasaly (1993), Aelius Aristides: Fontanella (2008), Pernot (2008); antiquarianism, e.g. Varro: Spencer (2011); architecture, e.g. Vitruvius: McEwen (2003). Contemporary, interestingly comparable literary examples: Calvino (1974); Bely (1995), Joyce (1998), Döblin (2003). Issues raised by classical authors percolate into modern treatments of world cities such as Paris (Hazan 2010), and Berlin (Ladd 1997). On the idea of the city, Bridge and Watson (2000, 7–17) introduce; Pinder (2005) explores the city-as-utopia; Beaumont and Dart (2010) tackle cities as zones of movement (on this topic for ancient Rome, Laurence and Newsome 2011); Spencer (2018) *inter alia* examines the presence of rusticity and farm-produce in Varro’s urban etymologies. Important recent work on urban strolling and ancient Rome includes Corbeill (2002), O’Sullivan (2006), Power (2009). Favro (1996) theorizes Augustan Rome from an architectural perspective. On what constitutes “Roman” landscape, Spencer (2010). On memory and the city, Boyer (1994) ranges widely; San Juan (2001) links classical and Renaissance textual “memory”; Gowing (2005) (drawing on Small 1997, the major Anglophone study) examines mnemotechnics’ illumination of imperial Rome. Theorizing “memory”: Fentress and Wickham (1992, “social”); Halbwachs (1992, “collective”); Assman (1995, “cultural”); Zerubavel (2003).

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CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO

The Renaissance: The “Discovery” of Ancient Rome

Brian A. Curran

Introduction: The Renaissance

The revival of ancient Rome is a recurring theme in virtually all accounts of the culture of the Renaissance, especially in Italy, where the desire to restore the lost glories of the ancient city and its Empire was felt most consistently (and passionately). Indeed, the very term, “Renaissance,” which emerged in the modern sense during the eighteenth century and was codified in the mid-nineteenth century by Jacob Burckhardt and others, carries with it the memory of the humanist concept of *rinascità* (“rebirth”), which contemporary writers, such as the artist and art historian Giorgio Vasari (1511–74), used to describe the artistic and intellectual accomplishments of the age (Ferguson 1947; Panofsky 1960, 1–41; Paoletti and Radke 2006, 44–5). Despite recent efforts to redefine (and rename) the period as part of a broader Early Modern era, the *renovatio Romae* continues to provide a basis for some groundbreaking, “revisionist” scholarship (Gouwens 1998; Findlen 1998; Rowland 1998; Barkan 1999; Nagel and Wood 2010). In this chapter, I will explore some of the manifestations of the Renaissance “discovery” of ancient Rome during the period c. 1300–1600. It is a story that has been told in various ways by generations of scholars (Burckhardt 1990; Lanciani 1902–16, 1989–2006; Weiss 1988; Grafton 1993), but it is my hope to add some elements of interest to the tale.

Rome: The Exquisite Corpse

The Renaissance admiration for Rome and its legacy was not a new thing. Indeed, throughout the Middle Ages, the achievements of the Romans were revered almost universally as marking the height of human accomplishment (Davis 1992). Roman “revivals” in the arts, literature, scholarship, and politics are familiar themes in Medieval European culture, from the Carolingian/Ottonian *renovatio* to the twelfth-century “Renaissance” and beyond (Haskins 1927; Panofsky 1960, 42–113; Benson and Constable 1982). But while the conspicuously ruined condition of the city made it clear that these days of

glory were long past, poetic lamentations over the ruins of Rome from this era were tempered by thoughts of its sanctification by the blood of the martyrs, and its conversion to the seat of the western Church (Heckscher 1938, Krautheimer 1980, 199–202; Carragáin and de Vegvar 2007, 1). By the fourteenth century, however, this sense of loss began to deepen, especially in Italy, where the writings of intellectuals like the Tuscan Francesco Petrarca (known in English as Petrarch, 1304–74) inspired the intellectual movement that we now call humanism (Campana 1946; Giustiniani 1985). The goal of this movement was nothing less than the total reclamation of the world of Roman antiquity, which its adherents sought to achieve through the concentrated study and imitation of its language, culture, and institutions (Kristeller 1979; Rabil 1988; Kraye 1996).

As other scholars have shown, there was a rich strain of creative invention and wish-fulfilling fantasy at the heart of the humanist project of *renovatio* (Mitchell 1960; Greene 1982a, 1982b). Thomas Greene has memorably described the humanist desire for the “resurrection” of Rome (and the broader Classical past) as it was conceived in two distinct but overlapping phases or processes: “There is first the archaeological impulse downward into the earth, into the past, the unknown and recondite, and then the upward impulse to bring forth a corpse whole and newly restored, re-illuminated, made harmonious and quick” (Greene 1982a, 41). During the fifteenth century, the intrepid traveler and inscription-hunter Cyriacus of Ancona (1391–1453/5) captured this resurrectionist impulse when he described his own activities as an effort “to wake the dead,” and lead “the glorious things which were alive” from the “dark tomb into the light, to live once more among living men” (Mitchell 1960, 470).

The tense but inseparable unity of Rome’s ancient greatness and present-day ruin finds concise expression in a sixteenth-century maxim: “Roma quanta fuit ipsa ruina docet (How great Rome was, its very ruins tell)” (Dacos 1985, 11–12, 102). This motto, whose roots have been traced to the twelfth-century (Krautheimer 1980, 200), seems to have appeared for the first time in Francesco Albertini’s *Opusculum de mirabilibus novae et veteris urbis Romae* (“Little Work on the Marvels of Old and New Rome,” 1510) (Albertini 1519, 75). It would turn up again on the frontispiece of Sebastiano Serlio’s *Third Book on Architecture* (1544), which was dedicated to the monuments of antiquity (Serlio 1996, 95)

In the mid-1530s, the “*ipsa ruina docet*” motto was inscribed on the upper part of a folio now preserved in the second of two celebrated albums of drawings of Roman monuments assembled by Maarten Van Heemskerck (Hülse and Egger 1913–16, 1.47, pl. 113; Dacos 1985, 11–12, 33–42). This is one of two sheets which, taken together, provide a panoramic view of the ruins of the Palatine hill and the nearby Septizodium from a corner of the Circus Maximus (see Figure 32.1). It is now attributed to Herman Posthumus

(1512; 1523–1566; 1586), a Netherlandish artist who visited Rome in the early-to-mid-1530s, at the same time as Heemskerck (Dacos 1995, 15–19, 43–51).

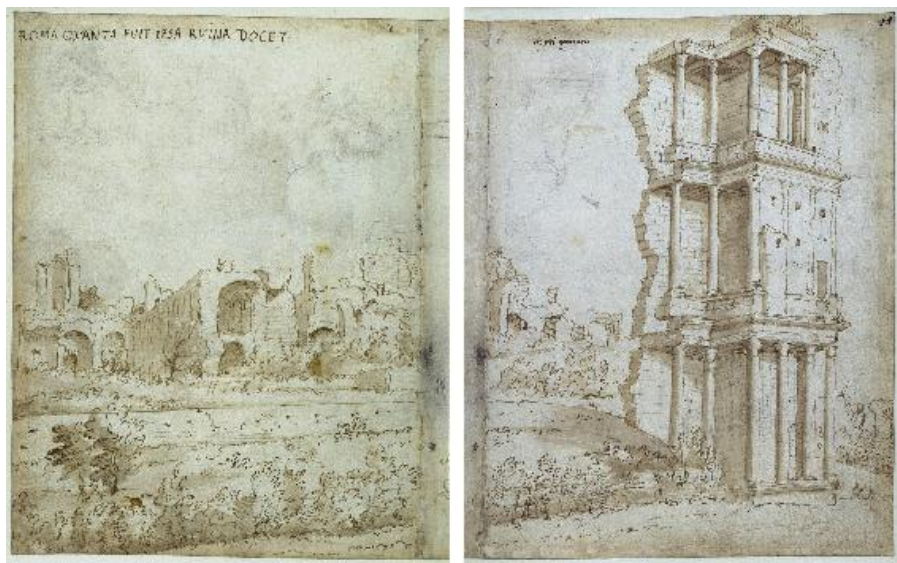


Figure 32.1 Anonymous A (Herman Posthumus), *View of the Palatine and the Septizodium*, c. 1535–1536. From the Roman Sketchbook of Maarten van Heemskerck, vol. II., fol. 91v–92r, Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen, Berlin, Germany. Art Resource.

Photo by Jörg P. Anders. Credit: Art Resource, NY. Source: bpk, Berlin/Staatliche Museen/Jorg P.Anders/Art Resource/NY.

Like other “antiquarian sketchbooks” of the period, the Heemskerck albums contain a rich and varied assortment of drawings of Roman antiquities (Nesselrath 1986). There are panoramic views of the Roman Forum, Palatine and other ruin-filled areas, studies of individual buildings (the Colosseum, the Pantheon, etc.) and of architectural details like capitals, vault decorations, and the like. There are sketches of altars, sarcophagi, and the heads, limbs, torsos, and feet of ancient statues, and views showing collections of ancient sculpture and other antiquities, stacked up in corners or arranged (somewhat) more neatly in the gardens and courtyards of the city’s new princely residences (Hülse 1917; Coffin 1991, 17–27; Christian 2008).

Another work by Herman Posthumus, *Landscape with Roman Ruins* of 1536 (Liechtenstein Museum, Figure 32.2, see Rubinstein 1985; Dacos 1985; Dacos 1995, 5–13), depicts some of the most compelling monuments of the ancient city, including the colossal head known as the Ludovisi Juno (center), the River Gods from the Quirinal hill (by this time moved to the Capitoline), a broken obelisk, an Egyptian sphinx, and the pair of Egyptian lions then displayed before the Pantheon. In the lower section, some figures with torches

explore the painted vaults of some buried complex, evoking the *grotte* of the Domus Aurea. Just below the head of Juno, a figure leans on some fallen columns and measures a tablet inscribed with a verse from Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*: TEMPVS EDAX RERVVM TVQVE INVIDIOSA VESTVSTAS O[MN]IA DESTRVITIS (“Oh, most voracious Time, and you, envious Age, you destroy everything”).



Figure 32.2 Herman Posthumus, *Landscape with Roman Ruins*, 1536. Oil on canvas, height 96 cm, width 141 cm. Signed and dated on the fragment of the foot to right of center: Herman posthum pingeb 1.5.3.6.

Photo Credit: Erich Lessing Credit: Art Resource, NY. Source: Erich Lessing/Art Resource, NY.

It is clear from these and other images of the city that the crumbled fabric of Rome in this era all too fittingly corresponded to the humanists’ metaphor of a corpse. Broken and consumed by a thousand years of war and internal conflict, the inhabited part of the city had shrunk to a small area on either bank of the curve of the Tiber, while vast sections to the east and south had been all but abandoned – the area known as the *disabitato*, as we see in [Figure 32.1](#) (Krautheimer 1980, 65–70).

One consequence of the widespread abandonment was confusion regarding original names and functions. In some Medieval descriptions, the Colosseum (which served for a time as a stronghold of the Frangipane family, and later as a quarry for building stone) was described as the Temple of the Sun (Rea 2001; Hopkins and Beard 2005, 161–227; Karmon 2005). In a related

tradition, the head, hand, and other fragments of a colossal bronze statue of a Constantinian emperor, then displayed at the Lateran, were believed to be the remains of a colossus that had stood at the center of the building ([Figure 32.3](#), Scherer [1955](#), 135–7; Bober and Rubinstein [2010](#), 234–5). Also at the Lateran, the bronze equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius ([Figure 32.3](#)) was variously identified as an image of the “Christian” emperor Constantine or other (sometimes imaginary) Roman heroes. The first to get it right, in 1479, was the papal librarian Bartolomeo Platina (1414–84) (Weiss [1988](#), 80; Haskell and Penny [1981](#), 252–5; Bober and Rubinstein [2010](#), 223–5).

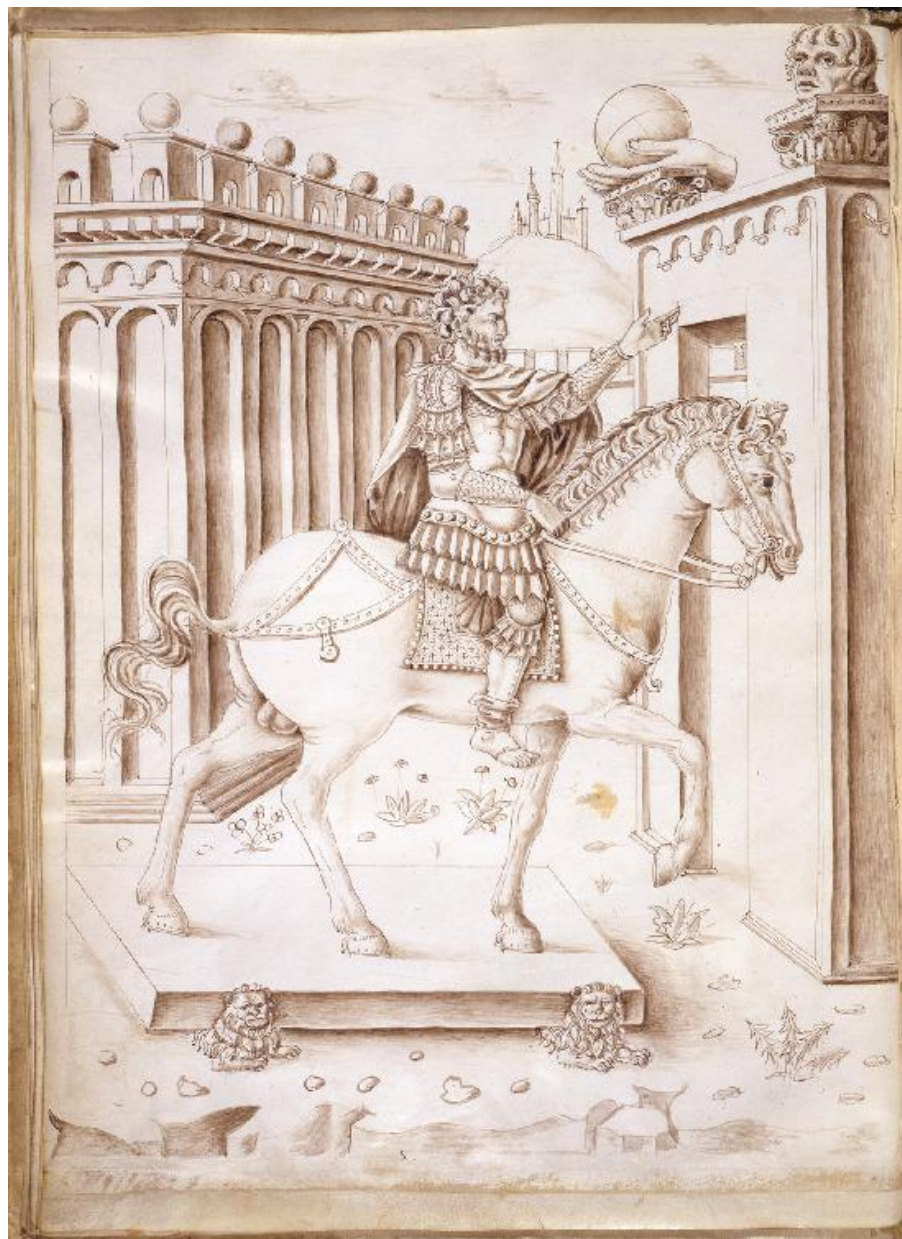


Figure 32.3 Giovanni Marcanova, Marcus Aurelius and Colossus at the Lateran. *Collectio antiquitatum* (c. 1465–1473), Princeton University Library, MS Garrett 158, fol. 13v.

The advent of a new age is represented by the writings of Petrarch, who drew on his own study of texts and inscriptions, as well the innovations of earlier scholars, in his antiquarian and historical works. Of course, there is much that remained traditional in his works as well, a fact exemplified for some by his continuing acceptance of the Medieval identification of the Vatican obelisk

(Figure 32.4) as the tomb of Julius Caesar and the pyramid of Gaius Cestius and its cousin at the Vatican as the Sepulchers of Romulus and Remus (Weiss 1988, 30–38; Curran 2007, 51–2). Whatever the limitations of his archaeological thought, however, there can be no doubt that Petrarch, who first visited Rome in 1337, was almost immediately seized by a passion for the ruins of the ancient city, and especially for their rich historical associations. In a famous letter to his Roman friend Giovanni Colonna, Petrarch later recalled “our walks in that city, so great that despite its immense population, it seems empty,” and where, “at every step,” they happened upon “something to stir our thoughts and words.” To make his point, Petrarch guides the reader through a densely packed description – we might even call it a litany – of Rome’s most significant monuments and sites, beginning with the places associated with its founders: “Here was the residence of Evander ... here the nursing she-wolf and “ruminalis” fig-tree of Romulus and Remus ... here were the games of the circus, the rape of the Sabine women, the marsh of Capraea, the place where Romulus disappeared ... here the unhappy Lucretia, escaping from her violation to death, fell upon her sword; here Brutus prepared vengeance for his offended honor ... Here Caesar triumphed, here he died.” [etc.] It is a brilliant performance, rich in erudition, as the author “re-populates” the ruins with the lost glories and deeds of its greatest heroes. Then, after a (very brief) invocation of the places associated with the first Roman martyrs, the author throws his hands up in a gesture of despair (“Why continue?”) before closing with the famous complaint that “nowhere is Rome less known than in Rome”, and his even more celebrated proclamation that “who can doubt that if Rome should commence to know itself it would rise again?” (translation from Bishop 1966, 63–5; see also Summit 2000).



Figure 32.4 Giovanni Marcanova, Vatican Obelisk. *Collectio antiquitatum* (c. 1465–1473), Princeton University Library, MS Garrett 158, fol. 6.

Petrarch's second exercise in Roman topography appears in his *Africa* (c. 1348–74), a “Virgilian” epic in Latin recounting the victory of Scipio Africanus over Carthage in the Second Punic War. In Book 8, the Carthaginian ambassadors are treated to a tour of the city, beginning at the Appian Gate and passing (once again) the palace of Evander, before moving from the Capitol to the Esquiline and the Quirinal, where “two naked giants

stand before their eyes, a celebrated work that men assign (so keen is competition for renown) either to famed Praxiteles or else to Phidias” (*Africa* 8.1293–97; Petrarch 1977, 215.) These are the so-called *Horse-tamers*, a pair of colossal statues perhaps representing Alexander the Great and his steed Bucephalus, or the *Dioscuri* (no one really knows for sure), which still stand today in the main piazza on the Quirinal hill (Scherer 1955, 137–8; Haskell and Penny 1981, 136–41; Bober and Rubinstein 2010, 172–5). To us, placing these statues in republican Rome seems more than a little anachronistic, and it is matched, if not surpassed, by a subsequent reference to “the massive tomb of Romulus” in the Vatican (*Africa* 8.1321–22; Petrarch 1977, 216), a slip that would be noted later by Poggio Bracciolini (see below). That said, as an exercise in critically informed historical reconstruction, this passage brings us to the threshold of the Renaissance “discovery” of Rome (for more, see Bernardo 1962 and Marchesi 2009).

Humanism, Politics, and the Recovery of Classical Literature

The revival of Rome stood at the very heart of Petrarch’s humanistic project. “What else in fact is the study of history,” as he famously put it, “if not the exultation of Rome?” (Mazzocco 2006, 232). In Petrarch’s case, this passion led him to embrace a succession of potential saviors, from king Robert of Anjou of Naples to the Roman revolutionary Cola di Rienzo (c. 1313–54) (Collins 2002; Musto 2003), whose attempt to “liberate” the city from papal and imperial rule and restore its dominion over the rest of Italy is one of the most fascinating episodes of the era (Collins 2002; Musto 2003). With the failure of Cola’s scheme, the Italian peninsula remained as it had been and would remain for centuries to come. Despite the tapestry of independent and politically diverse states that made up the Italian peninsula, large and small, a sense of their shared Roman heritage had survived. For the papacy, the Empire provided a precedent for its own claims to both temporal and universal authority (Stinger 1998; Rowland 1998). In the communal republics, the liberty and civic virtue of the Republic were continually invoked. The Florentines went so far as to backdate monuments like the Baptistery of San Giovanni in order to claim a Roman physical past (Baron 1966; Stinger 1988; Davis 1988; Hankins 2000). Some rulers, like the Este of Ferrara and the Visconti of Milan, claimed descent from a long line of Roman and/or Trojan worthies (Kirsch 1991, 74–86; Welch 1996, 172–3). Even the Venetians got into the act, importing the Trojan giant and Paduan founder-hero Antenor as part of their own claim to a Roman past (Fortini Brown 1996, 11–33, 41–42).

During the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the recovery of ancient texts was carried out on a heroic scale, as humanist “book-hunters” like the

Florentine Poggio Bracciolini (1380–1459) scoured the monasteries of Europe for manuscripts and delivered them into the hands of scholarly collectors like Niccolò Niccoli (1364–1437) and others (Reynolds and Wilson, 1991). By the turn of the sixteenth century magnificent manuscripts (and, from the 1460s on, printed editions) of the works of Livy, Cicero, Lucretius, and others filled the libraries of Europe (Reynolds and Wilson 1991; Reynolds 1983). The humanists produced critical editions and commentaries on the more significant texts, which were mined for their Latin style and vocabulary as much as they were for details regarding Roman history, institutions, and culture (Grafton 1977; 1988).

Petrarch himself discovered manuscripts of Livy's *History of Rome* and Cicero's *Letters to Atticus and Quintus* and *Pro Archia* (Reynolds and Wilson 1991, 128–32; Lorch 1988), which inspired a series of letters addressed to his long-dead Roman heroes, including Virgil and Cicero. One of his most influential works, *De viris illustribus* (“On Illustrious Men”), is a collection of biographies of ancient statesmen, generals, and heroes, beginning with Romulus and concluding with Trajan, which established the template for a whole genre of Renaissance literature, where the lives of distinguished personalities were presented as role models for contemporary readers (Kohl 1974; Witt 2009). Petrarch is also credited with introducing the notion of a “dark age” that separated the world of his own time from the glory of ancient Rome (Mommsen 1942; Mazzocco 2006, 233). During the next century, this concept of the *medium aevum* (“Middle Age”) would be codified by the great historian and student of Roman antiquity, Flavio Biondo (1392–1463) in his *Historiarum ab inclinatio romanorum imperii decades* (Decades of History from the Deterioration of the Roman Empire) completed in 1453 (Hay 1959; Kelley 1988, 242–4).

Ruins and *Renovatio*

In the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, Petrarch's successors began to apply his methods more systematically, including the study of texts, inscriptions, and the physical examination of ruins. In 1375, the physician and clock-maker Giovanni Dondi dall'Orologio (c. 1330–1389) visited Rome, where he copied inscriptions and even took the time to measure the porch of the Pantheon and the shadow cast by the Vatican obelisk (Figure 32.4, Weiss 1969/80, 49–53.). In so doing, he anticipated the efforts of fifteenth-century architects like Filippo Brunelleschi (1377–1446), who, according to his early biographers, measured and even dug into the foundations of ancient buildings during his own “Roman holiday” of about 1402–4 (Manetti 1970, 50–54). Around the same time (about 1410–15), an anonymous author (known to posterity as the Anonimo Magliabechiano), composed a description of the

antiquities of Rome, the *Tractatus de rebus antiquis et situ Urbis Romae* (D’Onofrio 1988, 103–96; Weiss 1969/80, 60–62; Jacks 1993, 89–93), that questioned some of the legends associated with monuments like the Roman pyramids, which the author argued could not have been built in the relatively primitive days of Rome’s foundation (Curran 2007, 53–5).

The “Anonimo” wrote his treatise during one of the most chaotic periods in Roman history. Within a few years, however, the situation began to improve. In 1417, the election of the Roman cardinal Odo (or Oddone) Colonna as Pope Martin V (reg. 1417–31) marked the beginning of the end of the long period of decline and conflict that had begun with the “Babylonian captivity” of the papacy in Avignon (1309–1378) and continued with the multiple papacies of the Great Schism (1378–1417). The return of the papal court to Rome in 1420 brought a renewed sense of urgency to the study of Rome’s ancient monuments, exemplified by the work of Poggio Bracciolini, Flavio Biondo, and others (McCahill 2009). These dedicated students of antiquity approached the ruins of Rome as a kind of three-dimensional puzzle, whose original forms (and meanings) could only be divined by a constant and diligent study of the full range of available materials.

Poggio’s most important contribution, *Ruinarum urbis Romae descriptio* (“Description of the ruins of the city of Rome”), appeared in 1448 as the opening section of his famous collection, *De varietate fortunae* (“On the Vicissitudes of Fortune”). The text takes the form of a dialogue between the author and his colleague Antonio Loschi (see D’Onofrio 1989, 67–90). Arriving at the summit of the Capitol, the two friends take the view from the remains of the “Tarpeian citadel” and ponder “the extent to which the cruelty of fortune has changed the appearance and nature of this actual city, so that it lies prostrate and stripped of all its splendor” (Elmer, Webb and Wood 2000, 7). But their sorrow is mitigated, to an extent, by Poggio’s expert description of what still remains. Drawing on his study of inscriptions, and some newly discovered texts, Poggio makes some real strides in the identification of Roman monuments (Weiss 1988, 63–6; Mazzocco 1975; Jacks 1993, 95–9). His section on the obelisks, now identified for the first time as Egyptian imports, marks the beginning of the modern discipline of Egyptology (Curran 2007, 58–9). He also recognized “the pyramid near the Ostian Gate...the noble funeral monument of Gaius Cestius, member of the College of the Priests responsible for supervising the banquet of the gods” (Elmer *et al.* 2000, 9), based on the correct reading of its inscriptions by Pier Paolo Vergerio (c. 1398) (Weiss 1988, 56). It must have been Vergerio and others that Poggio had in mind when he wondered “why Francesco Petrarch, that most erudite of men” could have mistaken this monument for the Tomb of Remus, and concluded that the great man “did not go to great effort in carefully examining an inscription hidden by vegetation. Those less learned who have followed afterwards have shown more diligence in reading these inscriptions” (Elmer *et*

al.2000, 9).

As it happens, Poggio's own *sylloge* of inscriptions has come down to us (Weiss 1988, 147; Grafton 1993, 92–5, pl. 76). This collection stands at the head of a whole tradition of copying inscriptions by such notables as Cyriacus of Ancona (1391–after 1453), Giovanni Marcanova (d. 1467), Felice Feliciano (1433–79/80), and Michele Fabrizio Ferrarini (d. before Feb. 1493) (see Weiss 1969/88, 145–66; Stenhouse 2005a, 21–32). Poggio's work also contributed to the revival of “antique” lettering that is one of the more notable legacies of the humanist movement (Saxl 1940–41; Ullman 1960, 21–57).

While Poggio's account was limited to surviving monuments, the work of his contemporary Flavio Biondo moved decisively in the direction of reconstruction and synthesis. Biondo's *Roma instaurata* (Rome Restored) of 1446 (text in D'Onofrio 1989, 99–266) was composed when the author was employed at the court of Pope Eugenius IV (reg. 1431–47) in Rome and later in Florence. In it Biondo attempts nothing less than a complete reconstruction of Rome as it appeared in antiquity, relying, like Poggio, on his own study of the monuments, inscriptions, ancient (and medieval) literary sources, structured around the useful if rather austere Regionary Catalogues of the fourth century (Weiss 1988, 30–38; Robathan 1970; Mazzocco 1983; Jacks 1993, 113–21; Pellegrino 2007).

Some years later Biondo returned to the subject of ancient Rome in his *Roma triumphans* (Rome Triumphant) of 1459. This time, in a series of dazzlingly erudite chapters, Biondo presents a historical reconstruction and analysis of the institutions of republican and imperial Rome, political, military, and religious, concluding in Book 10 with a detailed discussion of triumphal processions. After providing accounts of individual triumphs and the elements of the genre as a whole, Biondo argues that these ancient pagan triumphs provided the models for later processions by Christian leaders, including the popes in Rome. The relationship between ancient and modern practice permeates the whole book, as Biondo argues that the institutions of the Roman past could (and should) provide models for emulation by contemporary states, including, above all, the Roman Church. “What is new, and of great significance for subsequent Roman Renaissance attitudes”, as Stinger (1998, 183–4, 243–4) put it, is Biondo's rejection of the dichotomy between “ancient Rome's pagan idolatry and Christian Rome's martyr-sanctified soil. Even before the Apostle Peter's arrival, various signs, retrospectively recognized as prophetic, pointed to the city's destined role as Christian capital.”

During the sixteenth century, the stream of publications on Roman antiquities grew exponentially, feeding an expanding audience beyond the confines of Rome and Italy. The topographies of Andrea Fulvio (c. 1470–1527), the *Antiquaria Urbis* (1513), which took the form of a poem in Latin hexameters, and the *Antiquitates Urbis* (1527), a more detailed prose version, set the

standard of such works for the High Renaissance period (Weiss 1988, 86–9). In 1543 it was translated into Italian, another indication of the growing market for printed “guides” to Rome and its antiquities in the later sixteenth century (Schudt 1930).

The Discovery of Roman Art and Imagery

The rediscovery and revival of the “Classical” style and subject matter of ancient art is probably the most familiar aspect of the Renaissance “renewal of antiquity” (Panofsky 1960; Warburg 1999). As early as the mid-1300s, the Florentine painter Giotto di Bondone (1267/75–1337) had been celebrated as a new Apelles who had restored naturalistic life to the “dead” art of painting (Harrison 1995; Maginnis 1997, 79–82). By the middle of the fifteenth century, artist-writers like Alberti, Lorenzo Ghiberti (1378–1455), and Antonio Averlino, called Filarete (c. 1400–1469) were advising their contemporaries to follow the best models of the ancient Greeks and Romans in all matters artistic. But it was Giorgio Vasari, in his monumental *Vite de’ più eccellenti architetti, pittori, et scultori Italiani* (editions in 1550 and 1568), who provided the most expansive and influential definition of an antiquity-inspired “rebirth” of the arts in the Renaissance.

Vasari’s account begins with the naturalistic innovations of Giotto and describes the progress of the arts in three distinct stages over the next three centuries, culminating in the perfected style of Leonardo, Raphael, and Michelangelo, the last of whom is singled out for having surpassed even the ancients in the excellence of his work (Vasari 1996, 1.617–23). One of the developments that made this possible, Vasari claims, was the discovery, around the turn of the sixteenth century, of “certain antiquities cited by Pliny as amongst the most famous, such as the *Laocoön*, the *Hercules*, the Great *Torso* of the Belvedere, and likewise the *Venus*, the *Cleopatra*, the *Apollo*, and an endless number of others,” which allowed the masters of the third and “greatest” generation to overcome that “certain dryness, hardness, and sharpness of manner” that remained in the works of even the best artists of the previous era (Vasari 1996, 1.619).

In the preface to the 1568 edition, Vasari attributes the decline of the arts in late antiquity to a variety of causes, including the declining fortunes of the later empire, the establishment of a second capital in Constantinople, and the sacking of Rome by the Visigoths and their successors, and above all, by the iconoclastic zeal of the early Christians (Vasari 1996, 1.37–8). During the Middle Ages, as Tilmann Buddensieg has shown, the destruction of Rome’s pagan idols was considered one of the triumphal accomplishments of the Christian movement, for which Pope Gregory the Great (reg. 1590–1604) got much of the credit (Buddensieg 1965). By the middle of the fifteenth century,

however, the tide had turned. In his *Commentaries* (c. 1447–1455), the Florentine sculptor Lorenzo Ghiberti, infused with the humanist enthusiasm for everything ancient, condemned these actions in the strongest possible terms noting that, in addition to the works themselves, “the theoretical writings, the commentaries, the drawing and the rules for teaching such eminent and noble arts” had been destroyed as well, bringing all activity in the arts to a halt for a period of six hundred years (Holt 1957, 152-3). One of the goals of Ghiberti’s treatise was to rectify this loss by assembling, as best he could, what was known about the accomplishments of the artists of antiquity (most of his information came from Vitruvius and Pliny the Elder). In the third and final book of the collection, he describes the discoveries that he had seen for himself, including a statue of a *Hermaphrodite*, found in a Roman drain, whose marvelous gracefulness confirmed, in his eyes, the greatness of the ancient masters’ achievements (Holt 1957, 164).

Thus, just as the humanists sought through the recovery and study of ancient literature to renew the Latin language and restore the lost learning of the ancients, so too did artists like Ghiberti hope, by retrieving what they could of the historical and material legacy of ancient art, to reclaim its forgotten principles and apply them to the creation of newer, better works for their own time. In the process, a new conception of the “learned” artist emerged. Among these new heroes of the arts, there were many (like Ghiberti) who fashioned themselves as masters of “holy antiquity”, whose mastery of the repertoire of antique forms and iconography of the best ancient models made them worthy successors of their ancient forebears (Cast 1988; Ames-Lewis 2000, 109–207).

Meanwhile, according to both Vasari and Ghiberti, it was the ongoing discovery and study of ancient art, most notably sculpture, that had made it all possible. And it is indeed true that collection, display, and (increasingly over time) restoration of ancient sculpture is one of the signal manifestations of Renaissance culture (Haskell and Penny 1981, 1–15; Franzoni 1986; Barkan 1999). This was especially true in Italy, and even more particularly in Rome, where a seemingly inexhaustible supply of marble statues and antiquities of all sorts inspired and fueled the growth of truly monumental private and public collections, some of them (at the Vatican and Capitoline Museums, for example) still more or less intact, some long ago dispersed (Lanciani 1902–16, 1989–2006; Bentz 2003; Christian 2002; 2008; Stenhouse 2005b).

The story of the Capitoline collection begins at the Lateran as early as the ninth century, when some major bronze sculptures were gathered in front of the papal palace (Figure 32.3). By the time the bulk of the collection was transferred to the Capitol in 1471 as a gift to the “people of Rome” by Pope Sixtus IV (reg. 1471–84), the *She-Wolf*, the fragmentary “Colossus,” head and hand, and, in particular, the *Equestrian Statue of Marcus Aurelius*, which arrived a little later in 1538, had become three-dimensional emblems of the

city's past glories. Their transfer to the seat of Rome's new civic government represented papal recognition of its legitimate succession to the institutions of the Republic (Saxl 1957; Haskell and Penny 1981, 7–8; Marino 1989). By the 1520s, this collection was rivalled by a major display of ancient sculpture at the Vatican, which included the celebrated *Laocoön* group and the other pieces singled out by Vasari above (see Brummer 1970; Barkan 1999; Maffei 1999). There they represented the papacy's inheritance of the legacy of the Roman Empire and the cultural policy of the founder of the collection, Pope Julius II (reg. 1503–13), who encouraged his contemporaries to view him as a second Julius Caesar (Stinger 1998, 235–46, 272–6; Temple 2006).

In addition to these monumental civic and papal collections, there were any number of private collections of antiquities—including both inscriptions and sculpture – assembled by the noble and ecclesiastical families of Rome and displayed on palace facades as well as courtyards and statuary gardens, where they gave material form to these families' claim to ancient origins (Hülsem 1917, Bentz 2003, Christian 2010). And we cannot forget the celebrated “speaking statues”: the notorious Pasquino and his friends Marforio, Madama Lucrezia, *et al.*, whose scandalous commentaries and “dialogues” on the dubious character of Rome's ruling parties, pasted in the form of verses on the bases of these statues in their urban places of residence, continued to afflict the comfortable for many centuries to come (Reynolds 1985, Barkan 1999, 209–31, Curran and Raymond 2015).

Of course, the archive of ancient imagery was not limited to statues. There were also the reliefs carved, often at huge scale, on the triumphal arches, historiated columns, and other monumental structures, and the battles and other scenes carved on the fronts of numberless sarcophagi. Already in 1411 the Byzantine scholar, Manuel Chrysoloras (c. 1355–1415), who had been invited to teach Greek in Florence, argued that the images on Roman monuments surpassed the texts of the ancient authors as sources of historical information, since “they grant us eyewitness knowledge of everything that has happened, just as if it was present.” (Smith 1992, 201–2). Other historically significant imagery was provided in miniature by ancient coins, which bore tiny portraits of Roman emperors and worthies, and the monuments of Rome, collected throughout the Renaissance period by artists and scholars (Weiss 1988, 167–79; Cunnally 1999).

The situation is a bit less clear regarding the discovery of ancient painting. We can be certain that specimens of Roman mural painting and mosaic, as well as an occasional painted vase or two, provided some idea of the vast corpus of ancient painting, Greek and Roman alike, that had been lost to the ages. But the discoveries that we know about are relatively few before about 1480, when the buried vaults of the Domus Aurea inspired the invention of a new genre of Renaissance painting *all'antica*: the *grotteschi*, or “grotesques,” so-called because they were inspired by the decorations in these subterranean

“grottoes” (Dacos 1969). Even after that, documented discoveries of specific paintings are scarce prior to the early 1600s, when pieces like the *Aldobrandini Wedding* and the great *Nile Mosaic* of Palestrina became widely known and imitated (De Vos 1985; Joyce 1992).

Taken together, these monuments large and small provided an almost inexhaustible repertoire for the composition of “Roman” historical subjects during the Renaissance (Bober and Rubinstein 2010, 205–56). A good example is the drawing of a Roman triumph in the Marcanova manuscript at Princeton, dating c. 1465–1473 (Figure 32.5, see Lawrence 1927; Armstrong 2008, 24–7), where a fantastic Roman-style arch (possibly inspired by the Arches of Titus and Septimius Severus in the Roman Forum) frames the entry of a Roman commander and his troops. A few decades later, Andrea Mantegna’s great series of canvasses depicting the *Triumphs of Caesar* (1486–1501), commissioned (almost certainly) by Marchese Francesco Gonzaga of Mantua (reg. 1484–1519), gave monumental form to the same reconstructive impulse (Martindale 1979; Campbell 2004; Pincelli 2010).



Figure 32.5 Giovanni Marcanova, Triumphal Arch. *Collectio antiquitatum* (c. 1465–1473), Princeton University Library, MS Garrett 158, fol. 5r.

Mantegna’s work in Mantua represents a high point in the art of the earlier Renaissance for its conscious imitation of ancient forms and iconography. There is very little of the “anachronistic” mixture of motifs from past and present that characterized the historical art of his contemporaries in Florence and the other northern courts (Gombrich 1966a; Nagel and Wood 2010, 85–95). During the 20th century, Erwin Panofsky (1882–1968), building on the

earlier work of Aby Warburg, Fritz Saxl, and Jean Seznec, argued that the revival of classic art in Renaissance Italy was distinguished from earlier, medieval *renascences* of Classical/Roman elements by a gradual but ultimately decisive and permanent re-integration of Classical form and content that had remained separate during the Middle Ages (Seznec 1953, Panofsky 1960, 162–210). There can be little doubt that the archaeological character that we now recognize in the works of certain artists, such as Mantegna, Raphael, Titian (in his mythological pictures), and Giulio Romano, seems to prove Panofsky's point (see also Gombrich 1966b). But a glance at the broader fabric of Renaissance image-making reveals a wide variety of approaches to historical representation, or, as Nagel and Wood described it, a “plural temporality” (Nagel and Wood 2010, 7-19)

The complexity of the situation may be illustrated with a couple of examples. In his *Trattato di architettura* of about 1465, the Florentine sculptor/architect Filarete advised artists of his time to avoid anachronism in their representations of ancient subjects:

Suit the dress to the quality of those you represent. If you have to do a thing that represents the present time, do not dress your figures in the antique fashion. In the same way, if you have to represent antiquity, do not dress them in modern dress. Do not do as many I have already seen who alter the suitability of clothing. Frequently they have given modern dress to the ancients (Filarete 1965, 314; Burke 1969, 27).

In his own work, Filarete seems to have taken the principle of historical correctness very much to heart. For proof, we need only consider his relief of the *Crucifixion of St. Peter* (1445, Figure 32.6), from the stunningly “historicist” set of bronze doors he produced for St. Peter's Basilica. An archaeologically enhanced elaboration on earlier Roman representations of the Apostle's crucifixion between the two Roman pyramids or *Metae*, Filarete's relief is packed with antiquarian details, from the archaeologically correct features of the emperor Nero (derived from ancient coins) to the equipment of the soldiers and the ornamentation of the emperor's loggia. Lined up along the trophy-covered ground at the bottom of the panel are a series of monuments, including (from left to right) the “Meta Romuli” pyramid, the Mausoleum of Hadrian, and the Pyramid of Cestius, on which a figure of the armored goddess Roma leans. As an exercise in archaeological reconstruction, Filarete's relief has few peers, even among works produced many decades later (Hokinson 1970; Spencer 1979; Parlato 1988; Curran 2007, 68–9).



Figure 32.6 Antonio di Pietro Averlino, called Filarete, Crucifixion of Saint Peter, 1445, bronze with traces of enamel, Porta Argentea, Saint Peter's Basilica, Rome (Brian A. Curran).

The Reconstruction (and replication) of Ancient Rome

Our final topic, to be treated very briefly, is the representation of ancient Rome in printed and cartographic images. While some medieval maps following diverse formats are known, by the beginning of the 1400s the most common type took the form of a bird's eye view, oriented with the south at the top of the image, as represented in a fresco by Taddeo di Bartolo (1414) in the *Antecapella* of the Palazzo Pubblico in Siena and on an illuminated folio in the *Tres Riches Hours du Duc de Berry* (c. 1416) by the Limbourg Brothers (Miller 2003, 106–8). In about 1469–72, these early views were superseded by a series of maps found in three manuscript copies of Ptolemy's *Geography*, produced in Florence, which follow the same orientation but place the city more convincingly into a surrounding landscape (Miller 2003, 42–5). In all of these representations, the most notable Roman monuments, including the Colosseum, the Pantheon, the columns of Trajan and Marcus Aurelius, the *Horse-tamers*, and the statue of Marcus Aurelius, appear as charming, generalized miniatures. A more detailed version of the Ptolemy maps, drawn by Alessandro Stress in 1474, provides almost all of the monuments with a

label, changing some to reflect their new identities as developed in the writings of Flavio Biondo (Scaglia 1964; Miller 2003, 136–9). Towards the end of the century, perspective views in the *Supplementa? Chronicarum* (1491) and in Hartmann Schedel's *Liber Chronicarum* (1493) give a more “inhabited” impression of the city, in comparison to the empty monument-fields of the earlier maps (Miller 2003, 193–5).

All of the images we have discussed so far included representations of ancient monuments and ruins as aspects of the modern fabric of Rome. For more deliberately archaeological projects, we have to turn to the sixteenth century. We begin around 1515, when the painter and architect Raphael Sanzio of Urbino (1483–1520), not long after being appointed architect of St. Peter's Basilica, was charged with supervising the antiquities of Rome (including new discoveries) under the auspices of Pope Leo X (reg. 1513–21). Within a year or two, Raphael was in charge of a much more ambitious project, which he describes in his famous letter to Leo X as nothing less than a full reconstruction of the appearance of Rome in antiquity (Weiss 1988; Di Teodoro 1994). Every region of the city would be represented, with reconstructions of the major structures in the form of ground plans, sections, and exterior elevations. Among his collaborators were fellow artists (like Giulio Romano) and scholars, one of whom, Fabio Calvo, published a set of schematic wood-cut plans of the city in various stages of its ancient history in 1527 (Jacks 1990). According to contemporary reports, Raphael had completed the reconstruction of one region at the time of his death. No trace of the work survives, but its impact can be seen in the faithful reconstruction of the Vatican area that appears in the background of the fresco of the Vision of Constantine, begun by the master and completed in 1523–4 by his pupils Giulio Romano and Gianfrancesco Penni in the Hall of Constantine in the Vatican (cf. Fehl 1993; Curran 2007, 216–18).

With the advent of a more expansive print-culture (after c. 1540), images of ancient (and modern) Rome became more accessible to a broader audience of collectors, artists, and other admirers of the city in the form of individual or collectable series of prints (and toward the end of the period, in an increasing number of printed, illustrated books). The earliest major collections of views of Rome and its monuments was produced by Antonio Lafreri from the 1540s–70s and eventually known as the *Speculum Romanae Magnificentiae* (Corsi and Ragionieri 2004; Zorach *et al.* 2008, 11–23; Whitcombe 2008, 17–154). These magnificent, engraved views are the direct ancestors of the great images produced by Piranesi in the eighteenth century and the postcards of our own era, and like them, brought the dream and memory of Rome to places and people many miles away.

During the second half of the sixteenth century, a series of increasingly impressive printed maps of Rome, ancient and modern, began to appear on the market. The first was the measured plan of the city by Leonardo Bufalini

(1551), which included innovative, reconstructed ground plans of the ruins in the *disabitato* section of the city (Maier 2007), soon followed by two perspective maps showing Rome in antiquity produced by the Neapolitan painter and architect Pirro Ligorio (1510–83). Ligorio was an energetic student of antiquity, and although his published writing consists of just one small book on circuses and amphitheaters, this was a mere fragment of his major production (Ligorio 1553): a vast corpus of illustrated manuscripts that treated virtually every aspect of Roman antiquities, from inscriptions, coins and gems to statues and temples, which sadly remained unfinished at his death (Mandowsky and Mitchell 1963; Venetucci 2003). His *Anteiquae urbis imago* (“Image of the Ancient City,” 1561), an engraving in 12 sheets that, when assembled, measured 1403 x 1600 mm, was a spectacular achievement (Burns 1988; Grafton 1993, 106–11).

In this densely packed image, ancient Rome appears again as a landscape of urban marvels, stuffed to the brim. For the areas and details for which there was no information, Ligorio relied on his own deep knowledge and fertile imagination. Nothing was left out. His map is the greatest Renaissance precursor of the enormous plaster model of Rome in the Constantinian era (16x17 m) produced for the Mostra Augustea della Romanità (1937) and displayed, since 1955, at the Museo della Civiltà Romana at EUR. It is a vision that lives on, today, in the cinematic grandeur of Mervyn LeRoy’s *Quo Vadis?* (1951), Anthony Mann’s *The Fall of the Roman Empire* (1964), and Ridley Scott’s *Gladiator* (2000), and most recently in the entertaining HBO miniseries, *Rome* (2005–2007), where the seedier side of the ancient city received a comparably loving “reconstructive” treatment. Rome is always being reborn, because Rome never dies.

Guide to Further Reading

The Renaissance “discovery” of ancient Rome is a recurring and foundational theme in virtually all discussions of Italian Renaissance art and culture. A comprehensive collection of important works on Renaissance humanism, antiquarianism, and Classical “revivals” could (and does) fill the shelves of a good-sized library. Among the most important and influential studies, the works of Burckhardt (1990), Lanciani (1899; 1902–16; 1989–2006), Hülsen (1917), Mitchell (1960), Mandowsky and Mitchell (1963), Weiss (1988), Stinger (1981, 1998), Grafton (1977; 1991a, b; 1992; 1993; 2000, etc.), Greene (1982a), Rowland (1998), and Stenhouse (2005a) are of fundamental importance. For useful overviews of Renaissance humanism, see Kristeller (1979), Rabil (1988), and Kraye (1996). For the most influential modern study of the humanist culture of imitation, which is essential to any understanding of the “revival” of Rome during this period, see Greene (1982b). Modern

editions of early texts are more of a challenge to find, although Valentini and Zucchetti (1940–53) and D’Onofrio (1988; 1989) provide transcriptions of the earlier material in the original language (and in the case of D’Onofrio, modern Italian translation). New English editions of some key works, including Giovanni Boccaccio’s *Genealogy of the Pagan Gods* (vol. I, Solomon 2011) and Flavio Biondo’s *Roma Instaurata* are being or will be released in the Villa I Tatti Renaissance Library in the next few years. Another source in recent years has been the availability, for download, of scanned, pdf copies of early printed editions from library collections. For the “revival of antiquity” in the arts, the studies of Warburg (1999), Seznek (1953), and Panofsky (1960) are foundational. Among more recent works, see Barkan (1999), Bentz (2003), and Christian (2002; 2008) for the “discovery” and collection of ancient sculpture; Greenhalgh (1978) for a useful general survey of Classical themes in post-Antique art; and Settis (1984–86) for a very good collection of topical discussions, in Italian. Also essential is the monumental, multiauthor work on all things Classical, Grafton, Most and Settis (eds.) *The Classical Tradition* (2010).

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CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE

Napoleonic Rome and “Roma Capitale”

Pier Luigi Tucci

Rome had long been an artistic center where painters, sculptors, and architects met and learned their crafts by drawing the works of past masters and surveying the remains of ancient buildings; in the early eighteenth century it became an indispensable stop on the “grand tours” that accompanied the education of every young European aristocrat. This period ended abruptly with the French invasion of Italy in 1796 and the sack of Rome in 1798. In 1797 over 100 masterpieces from the Vatican Museums were carried off to Paris by Napoleon and installed in a place of honor in the Musée Napoléon at the Louvre. When Pius VII became pope in 1800, he inherited a devastated city from which many other works of art had been taken to enrich French collections. In 1801 Carlo Fea (1753–1836), a distinguished lawyer and classical scholar, was appointed papal Commissario delle Antichità (Commissioner of Antiquities) to protect the monuments and undertake new excavations in search of ancient sculpture to replace those carried off to France. Under his supervision, convicts began the first excavations around the Arches of Septimius Severus and of Constantine and at the Colosseum (Ridley 1992, 35–46). Napoleon’s troops invaded again in 1807, annexing Rome in 1809 as the second city of the Empire (Ridley 1992). The new Imperial city enjoyed numerous privileges, including huge appropriations for the repair of its antiquities and its general embellishment. Indeed, during the French occupation of Rome, which lasted until 1814, the city’s most important ancient buildings received their first systematic excavation and restoration (Ridley 1992, 94–216). The older papal system survived in part alongside a new French organization led by the Prefect Camille de Tournon, who arrived in Rome on November 5, 1809, issuing important regulations in July of the following year that governed both excavations and the export of antiquities (Ridley 1992, 56). Although bureaucratic control remained in Paris (where a variety of ministries claimed control over the archaeological and town planning work in Rome, even though they had never been to the city and simply relied on impressions from their classical education), French administrators instituted various operations on the spot to liberate Rome’s ancient monuments from later accretions and restore them, thereby also providing employment for the poorer sectors of the local population. The list is impressive: the “Temple of Vesta” (Round Temple by the Tiber) was cleared and restored in 1809; the three columns of the Temple of “Jupiter Tonans” (Divus Vespasian), cleared, dismantled and re-erected in 1810; the

arena of the Colosseum in 1810–13; the “Temple of Peace” (Basilica of Maxentius/Constantine) in 1811–13; part of the Basilica Ulpia in the Forum of Trajan in 1812–13.

The French administration was fully supported by leading Roman artists and architects, notably Antonio Canova, Antonio Nibby, Giuseppe Valadier, and Giuseppe Camporese, and by antiquarian scholars, such as the already mentioned Carlo Fea, who remained in his post as Commissario delle Antichità. Three bodies worked side by side: 1) the *Commission des Embellissements de la Ville de Rome*, set up on 27 July 1811, with an annual budget of 1,000,000 francs; 2) the long-established local Roman academy of arts, the *Accademia di San Luca* (Academy of St Luke) which, from the autumn of 1810, under the direction of Antonio Canova, was given a budget of 75,000 francs for restorations and 200,000 for excavations; 3) Martial Daru, *Intendant des Biens de la Couronne* (superintendent of Crown property), who searched for works of art through excavation.

In the heart of the ancient city the Napoleonic administration bought and demolished many houses which had been built into ancient structures, removed vast quantities of earth, and reinforced monuments in danger of collapse. The regime, which took Pius VII’s attitudes to the preservation of monuments to a new level of practicality and expertise, introduced new techniques in excavations, and was the first large-scale archaeological program in the city. The French projects aimed at linking the ancient monuments into the modern city, but works such as the excavation of the arena of the Colosseum or the restoration of the temples beside the Tiber also had the secularization of the city as a second goal (the temples had been converted into churches and the arena of the amphitheater, too, had been “Christianized” – a cross was erected in the middle, whereas a chapel and tabernacles of the Stations of the Cross were built around the edge of the arena to commemorate the Passion of Christ). The typical procedure was the clearance of the lower parts of the monuments, which also allowed the French *pensionnaires*, holders of the *Grand Prix de Rome* (a prestigious prize awarded to young artists and architects), to study and survey them carefully. Their *envois* (architectural drawings and reconstructions) of the most important monuments of Rome are valuable even now because they portray the ancient buildings before the modern restorations and degradation (Roma Antiqua I 1985–6; Roma Antiqua II 1992).

These projects were greatly influenced by Napoleonic concepts of urban grandeur and planning. Monuments were cleared and restored, such as the Arch of Dolabella on the Caelian, the Arch of Janus and the Temple of “Fortuna Virilis” (Portunus) in the Forum Boarium, the Colosseum (notably the excavation of the arena), the Column of Marcus Aurelius, Nero’s Golden House (Domus Aurea), the temples in the Forum Holitorium, the Roman Forum (the Column of Phocas, the temples of Saturn and Vespasian, Castor

and Pollux, Antoninus and Faustina), the Mausoleum of Augustus, the imperial palaces on the Palatine, the Porticus of Octavia, the so-called Tabularium, the Temple of Venus and Rome, the Temple of Vesta, and a number of minor remains around the ancient city, as attested by archival documents kept in the State Archive of Rome and in the National Archives in Paris.

After the French occupation ended in 1814 and the papal authority was reinstated, popes Pius VII, Leo XII, and Pius VIII endeavored to continue the French program of excavation and restoration, but on a much reduced scale, taking the architects, engineers, and antiquarians who had worked for the French administration, back into service. The French had freed the Arch of Titus of medieval accretions, but left it in a weakened state. Raffaele Stern made plans to dismantle and rebuild it before his death in 1820, after which the work was continued by Giuseppe Valadier from 1822 to 1824. Valadier gave Stern full credit for the idea of rebuilding the missing sections of the piers and attic in travertine stone, so as to distinguish the lost sections from the white marble of the original. Another important restoration – the buttress to the Colosseum on the side facing the Arch of Constantine – was also the work of Valadier in 1822–26. This restoration was very different from the earlier work of Stern on the same building – the buttress on the opposite side, made in 1806–07. Whereas Stern had used a massive sloping pylon of brickwork, Valadier made his buttress reproducing the arches of the three storeys. Valadier also worked on a new project for the Roman Forum (1821), already conceived under the French government, which included digging in the whole area from the Capitoline hill to the Colosseum, and from the Palatine down to the Via Sacra.

An edict issued by Cardinal Pacca on April 7, 1820, reorganizing the administrative service, became a milestone in the legislation on antiquities before the Unification of Italy (Jonsson 1986, 146–51) because of the priority given to the conservation of ancient Roman buildings, the limitations to illegal excavations, and the export of works of art. The publication of the proceedings of the *Pontificia Accademia Romana di Archeologia* (the Pontifical Roman Academy of Archaeology) began in 1821, while the *Bullettino dell’Istituto di Corrispondenza Archeologica* (the journal of the German Archaeological Institute in Rome) began in 1829.

On September 20, 1870 the Italian army entered Rome by breaching the Aurelian Wall near Porta Pia, and annexed the city to the nascent kingdom of Italy. In July 1871, the capital was moved to Rome from Florence. The papal city had changed very little from the years of the French occupation and the Italian kingdom inherited a backward and provincial town. Nevertheless the population had grown to some 226,000 inhabitants, and it was to double between 1870 and 1901 as immigrants from all parts of the kingdom kept pouring into the new capital, which was totally unprepared to accommodate

them.

In 1870 the urban fabric took up less than a third of the land inside the Aurelian Walls; the rest was occupied by vineyards and aristocratic villas. Sheep grazed as far as the Forum of Trajan, and the Tiber regularly flooded the city (e.g. on December 26, 1870 the level of the river rose halfway up the Pantheon columns (see Aldrete, [Chapter 17](#) in this volume). In 1873, provision for the embankment of the river was made for the first time since antiquity and the construction of the huge walls progressed quickly. The necessary demolitions, however, struck ancient bridges, sewers, walls, port structures, quays, and all the buildings that once bordered the river (see Rice, [Chapter 9](#) in this volume).

In that same year, the city council approved a master plan for the expansion and embellishment of the city of Rome (“Piano Regolatore”), which had been prepared by a special commission instituted in 1871. In fact, the process of modernization had already begun ten years earlier, when Pope Pius IX had ordered work to begin on Rome’s Termini railway station near the Baths of Diocletian in 1862, which destroyed an entire quarter of the imperial city including the so-called Monte della Giustizia – a long stretch of the Servian Walls – and the reservoir of the Baths of Diocletian (the “Botte di Termini”), as well as public and private buildings (Barbera and Paris [1996](#), 14–28). From 1859 Francesco Saverio de Merode, the Pope’s “Minister of Arms,” laid out two new boulevards – Via Nazionale and Via Cavour – in land adjacent to the railway station, and other blocks were built on the healthy high ground of the Esquiline hill, around the piazza Vittorio Emanuele. Here, the systematic levelling of the area spared only the monumental fountain of Alexander Severus (traditionally called the Trophies of Marius). The Villa Ludovisi on the Pincian Hill and the Prati beyond the Castel S. Angelo were also partitioned for development. Only a wide swathe in the city center, including the Roman Forum, the Palatine, the Oppian hill, the Colosseum valley, the western and southern slopes of the Caelian hill, the Baths of Caracalla, the Circus Maximus and the beginning of the Via Appia, was to be protected. From 1887 to 1917 the ancient buildings in this area (the so-called Zona Monumentale, or Passeggiata Archeologica) were connected together by public gardens and wide avenues (Benevolo [1985](#)).

At the same time, the old heart of the city was transformed as the new capital of the Italian state tried to compete with Vienna, Paris and London. Financed for the most part by northern Italians and foreign investors who cared very little for Rome and her archaeological heritage, new urban districts engulfed the old city, which was devastated by immense building operations. Many of the ministries and offices were provisionally quartered in convents and private palaces, while others were built *ex novo*, designed in a neo-antique style. This vast program initially affected the Quirinal hill and the neighborhood along Via XX Settembre during the 1870s and 1880s: in 1873 the displacement of

thousands of cubic meters of material began, preparing the way for the construction of the new Ministry of Finance (1871–6), on whose site the archaeologists recorded the uncovering (and following destruction) of baths, private buildings, inscriptions, and more of the Servian Walls. In the early twentieth century other sites were opened for new government offices, by then located in every quarter of the city. The construction of the Palazzo di Giustizia (nicknamed the Palazzaccio) in the Prati neighborhood began in 1889 – it was here that the sarcophagus was discovered of a young girl, buried with a celebrated ivory doll (Crepereia Tryphaena 1983). In 1884 the government approved the project by Giuseppe Sacconi for a gigantic monument to King Victor Emanuel II (1849–78) at the north end of the Capitoline hill, which was inaugurated in 1911. The work entailed the destruction of numerous ancient and medieval structures (Brancia di Apricena 2002) – one of the few survivors was the tomb of C. Publicius Bibulus, placed on public display at Piazza Venezia.

Speculation in housing developments for an overcrowded city and the desire for wide thoroughfares led to the demolitions (“*sventramenti*”) of entire neighborhoods and a number of pre-existing streets were widened; others followed an irregular route in order to spare ancient monuments and churches (e.g. Corso Vittorio Emanuele II cut through the Campus Martius in the 1880s). Fortunately, the private building boom ended in 1887 when a financial crisis stopped all building and archaeological activities.

Whole sectors of the ancient city, never seen before due to occupation by medieval and Renaissance houses, were uncovered only to be immediately destroyed – very rarely were the remains preserved or even documented through photographs and drawings. The sheer quantity of lost discoveries during this period is horrifying. Rodolfo Lanciani (1845–1929), engineer turned archaeologist and topographer, who served as director both of the excavations of Rome and of the Planning Office for the Archaeological Zone (1876), provides a wealth of information about finds made during the course of the late nineteenth-century urban development in his *Ruins and Excavations of Ancient Rome* (Lanciani 1897). He proudly noted that the renewal of Rome in its first fifteen years as the capital was connected with “the progress of Roman archaeology, because... it is easy to understand what an amount of discoveries must have been made by turning up *two hundred seventy million* cubic feet of that land of promise.” He could not ascertain the exact number of works of art and antiquities brought to light by the government in the official excavations or by private citizens in their own houses and, while he admitted that “all these great conquests in the artistic and scientific field have been obtained with a certain amount of loss and sacrifice,” he declared “if there is a class of people that has no right to complain, it is the archaeological brotherhood; because never before has such a field been thrown open to their investigation, never has the Roman soil yielded such a

magnificent archaeological harvest, as within the last few years” (Lanciani 1889, x–xxix). In those years, whole cemeteries of the Archaic and Republican periods, porticoes, temples, basilicas, imperial villas, etc., vanished beneath the new streets and blocks, not to mention the destruction wrought by illegal excavations in both the center of the city and in the countryside. The local archaeologists operated of necessity within this framework – often coerced or impotent witnesses, sometimes guilty themselves of clandestine excavations.

As the devastation advanced, an ambitious program for the preservation of the archaeological heritage was formulated, furthering the earlier projects of the Napoleonic and papal administrations. Cardinal Pacca’s Edict of 1820, which had been aimed at preventing the exodus from Rome of the artistic treasures preserved in private galleries, was temporarily revived. Although the function of the city had changed radically in the interval, such continuity with the ancient past had an ideological as well as practical motive. The new Italian state wanted to link itself to the memory of ancient Rome as much as the French or the popes, bringing it to life with excavations and new projects in the monumental center of the city, seeking to forge a national identity in its cultural and historic splendors. Fortunately, a new methodology and operating procedure developed at the same time, characterized by a clear vision of the scientific purpose of archaeological research: excavations were no longer to be aimed only at recovering statues and other valuable objects, but at preservation of the monuments, considered as historical documents, and could also be undertaken with the sole scope of fostering topographical studies. This new scientific vision of ancient history was championed first by Pietro Rosa (1810–1891), then by Rodolfo Lanciani and Giacomo Boni (1859–1925), rebelling against the antiquarian culture of the past decades. It is worth noting that, like the rest of Europe, Rome had as yet no school of archaeology in which to train, and excavators were usually engineers by profession (with the exception of the *Scuola Archeologica di Pompei* founded by Giuseppe Fiorelli in 1866, whose aim was to train excavators as well as museum staff).

On November 8, 1870 the *Soprintendenza agli Scavi e Monumenti della Provincia di Roma* was created, with its headquarters on the Palatine hill, and Pietro Rosa as its first director. Rosa had been conducting excavations on the Palatine since 1861 on behalf of Napoleon III, and on December 2, 1870 the hill was handed over to the Italian government. In the Roman Forum, where excavations of 1801 had left the monuments poking out of deep holes in the ground, Pietro Rosa began the first methodical large-scale open area excavations in 1870. He was followed by Giuseppe Fiorelli (1823–1896), who was Director General of *Antichità e Belle Arti* 1875–96, and then by Rodolfo Lanciani from 1878 to 1886. From 1898 to 1903 the excavations were entrusted to Giacomo Boni (1859–1925), one of the most important scholars of Italian archaeology: his name is tied to all the most important discoveries in

the Roman Forum, carried out using the new stratigraphic method of excavation. He investigated the Temple of Julius Caesar, the Temple of Vesta, the Regia, the Temple of Antoninus and Faustina, the Basilica Aemilia, the House of the Vestal Virgins, the Comitium, the Pool of Juturna, the Basilica of Maxentius/Constantine. He also cleared the approach from the Forum to the Palatine palace and discovered the series of early Christian paintings in S. Maria Antiqua. His excavations reached deep below the imperial levels, to a period when the area around the Roman Forum was a necropolis (next to the Temple of Antoninus and Faustina, for instance). Other sensational finds included the *lapis niger* and the Republican Comitium.

In 1872 the Municipality of Rome created its own Commissione Archeologica Comunale di Roma, whereas in 1875 the Italian State instituted a “Direzione Generale dei Musei e Scavi di Antichità” (eventually renamed “Direzione Generale Antichità e Belle Arti”). The two superintendencies coexisted in hostility: it was not by chance that they both started the publication of archaeological reports in 1876 – the *Bullettino della Commissione Archeologica Comunale di Roma* and the *Notizie degli Scavi di Antichità* (founded by Felice Bernabei) – whose content inevitably overlaps. A new National Archaeological Museum, the *Museo Nazionale Romano*, was officially instituted in 1889 (and inaugurated the following year) to emulate the historic municipal collections of the Campidoglio (the Capitoline Museums) and to accommodate the countless objects which were being discovered every day in the building works throughout the city. Classical antiquities dating from the fifth century BCE to the third century CE were displayed in the halls of the Baths of Diocletian on the Viminal, while finds of pre-Roman date from Latium, southern Etruria and Umbria – mainly of Etruscan art and architecture – went on show from 1889 in the Villa Giulia, outside the Walls, beside the Via Flaminia.

Guide to Further Reading

On the archaeology of Rome during the Napoleonic era, see in particular Ridley [1992](#). For architectural drawings and reconstructions of the most important monuments of Rome as they looked when excavated in this period, see *Roma Antiqua I* 1985–6; *Roma Antiqua II* 1992. On Carlo Fea, appointed Commissioner of Antiquities by Pope Pius VII in 1800, see Ridley [2000](#).

On the redevelopment of Rome as “Roma Capitale” in the late nineteenth century, see Petter [2000](#). For details of finds made during the archaeological excavations that accompanied this development, see Lanciani [1889](#) and 1897.

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CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR

Mussolini and Rome

Borden Painter

On May 9, 1936, an “oceanic” crowd in the Piazza Venezia heard Benito Mussolini, the Duce of fascism, declare that Italy again had an empire, a fascist empire. His fascist legions had conquered Ethiopia, avenging the defeat at Adowa in 1896. King Victor Emmanuel III assumed the title Emperor of Ethiopia, but Mussolini left no doubt that he stood before them as the new Augustus.

The image of imperial Rome permeated Mussolini’s thinking and fascist ideology well before the Ethiopian campaign of 1935–36. In 1922, just months before the March on Rome, Mussolini spoke of creating a new Rome for Italy based on the discipline, work, and fighting spirit of ancient Rome (Painter 2005, 3). He founded the Institute for Roman Studies in 1925 to disseminate knowledge of Rome (Nelis 2007, 397 n. 30). A renewed and revived *romanità* undergirded fascist ideology, using the greatness of the Roman past as the path to fascist Italy’s future as a modern nation and respected European power. The concept of *romanità* combined fascism’s emphasis on youth, revolution, modernity and a new Italy with the glories of ancient Rome (Cannistraro 1982, 461–4; Visser 1992, 5–22).

Mussolini set about rebuilding the city of Rome as a living symbol of *romanità* in action. The physical transformation of the city in the next two decades—fascism’s *ventennio*—embodied Mussolini’s dream of a fascist revolution. Constructing a new Rome paralleled the effort to create new Italians, a new race of disciplined builders and warriors that would make the twentieth century the century of fascism. Fascism positioned itself as a “third way” to the future, superior to both liberal capitalism and Soviet communism.

Romanità made ancient Rome fascism’s favored period of history and implied the ranking of the other periods of Italy’s past. Second to Rome came the Middle Ages and the Renaissance when the papacy led Christendom and Italy’s artistic and cultural revival spread throughout Europe. Subsequently Italy slid into decadence until the Risorgimento’s drive for a new and unified country in the nineteenth century. The least-favored period was from 1870 to 1915, when Liberal Italy failed to fulfill the aspirations of the new nation. Now fascism would lead the “Third Rome” in fulfilling the Risorgimento and setting an example of universal significance (Kostof 1973, 8–9). This pecking order of the past informed the projects that created the new Rome through demolition and construction.

Mussolini divided the work needed to transform the city into grandeur (*grandezza*) and necessity (*necessità*). Grandeur included “liberating” ancient monuments and historical sites, such as the Theater of Marcellus and St. Peter’s, as well as creating modern monuments, such as train stations, post offices, sports complexes and schools that showcased fascism’s dynamism. Necessity led to demolishing unwanted structures, providing new housing, widening streets, and improving traffic. The regime boasted that these public works of demolition and construction put Italians back to work.

The changes within the third-century Aurelian Walls required demolition (*sventramenti*) of old structures as well as building new ones. As with any major urban change, controversy could erupt over specific projects that might destroy an old neighborhood or tear down a baroque church. Archaeologist Giovanni Giglioli defended the regime’s record when he wrote in 1942 that fascism faced the dilemma of any major urban change: either become a prisoner of venerating the past and change nothing or go about bringing change to meet modern needs with all the risks such work entailed. The latter, he argued, was the Roman way. Just as imperial Rome superimposed itself on Republican Rome and Renaissance and Baroque Rome destroyed much of medieval Rome, so now fascist Rome superimposed itself on all the preceding periods (Gentile [2007](#), 163).

One of Mussolini’s earliest projects began in 1926 when a developer presented plans in the area of the historic, eighteenth-century Teatro Argentina. Demolition took down the sixteenth-century church of San Nicola ai Cesarini, as well as many other structures, and also revealed the first of four ancient temples. Mussolini announced that these Republican monuments must be preserved rather than allowing new buildings to cover them. In fascist terms, slums gave way to the liberation of Roman artifacts that could only inspire. Unveiling of the completed project at the Largo Argentina came on April 21, 1929, the traditional anniversary of Rome’s founding.

Mussolini proclaimed April 21 “*una giornata fascista*” that became a favorite date to open projects of the regime. It placed second only to October 28, the anniversary of the fascist March on Rome in 1922 that led to Mussolini’s appointment as prime minister by King Victor Emmanuel III. For the fascists October 28, 1922 began the new fascist era that would lead to the fulfillment of the fascist revolution. It marked the beginning of a new calendar used alongside the traditional one so that fascist landmarks in Rome would henceforth carry inscriptions such as “Anno VII E. F.,” i.e. the seventh year of the “Era Fascista,” or 1929.

Another of the early projects ran from the Victor Emmanuel Monument to the Circus Maximus that would create the first stretch of the Via del Mare that someday would link the city to Ostia and the sea. The construction of this wide street, today the Via del Teatro di Marcello and the Via Petroselli, destroyed the neighborhood centered on the Piazza Montanara. The

government transferred the working class residents to new housing, often distant from the historic center (Kostof 1973, 64–5).

Pictures show a smiling Mussolini surrounded by workers with the Teatro di Marcello in the background, “liberated” by 1930. The new street also gave more prominence and easier access to the grand stairs up to Michelangelo’s Capitoline Hill. Several more ancient sites in the Piazza Bocca della Verità were exposed: the fourth-century Arch of Janus and the two ancient temples, the circular so-called Temple of Vesta and the rectangular Temple of Fortuna Virilis. Two medieval landmarks also gained enhanced exposure: San Giorgio in Velabro just behind the Arch of Janus and Santa Maria in Cosmedin facing the piazza and the two temples.

Work on the Via del Mare to the Piazza Bocca della Verità finished in 1939. Between the Theater of Marcellus and the two temples stood the new headquarters of the Governatorato that is today Rome’s Anagrafe or hall of records. Its redbrick design with travertine lined windows and third-floor arcade is an example of a type of fascist architecture in the 1930s that sought to be modern by incorporating motifs drawn from ancient Rome.

Three other projects were linked to the Via del Mare: the Via dell’Impero, the Via dei Trionfi and the Via del Circo Massimo. The first, the Via dell’Impero, took shape as part of the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the March on Rome, the *decennale* (Kostof 1973, 60). It cut a straight path from the Victor Emmanuel and the Piazza Venezia to the Colosseum. It required the destruction of another neighborhood and the displacement of its inhabitants as well as the leveling of the Velium hill in front of the Colosseum. Once it opened on October 28, 1932, it served as the major route for fascist parades. The street gave new exposure to the Colosseum and the Roman Forum. As visitors walked from the Piazza Venezia toward the Colosseum they now had views of Trajan’s Column, Market and Forum as well the Forums of Augustus, Caesar and Nerva. Statues of these four emperors stand on the street to this day. Closer to the Colosseum lies the newly isolated Basilica of Maxentius. Next to it, the regime unveiled four marble maps in 1934 depicting the Roman Empire from its origins to the reign of Trajan. A fifth map of the fascist empire added after the conquest of Ethiopia quickly disappeared when the Allies occupied the city in 1944.

The supposed archeological benefits of the Via dell’Impero, now the Via dei Fori Imperiali, caused some disagreement at the time and controversy continues to this day. The street represents the political archeology of fascism, for it exposed imperial remains meant to conjure up thoughts of the new fascist empire and the relentless efforts of the Duce to lead Italy into a bright new future. One defender reminded critics that the project was about archeology only in part. The street had to function as a modern thoroughfare to improve traffic in a modern city. “It is a modern street which also endeavors to give value to the remains of the Imperial Forums and

monuments, and give a panoramic view of them which, in some particular spots, is superb” (Painter 2005, 24–5). He concluded that more had been gained than lost.

The tall figure in formal attire and top hat accompanying Mussolini as he inaugurated his major projects was Antonio Muñoz, Inspector General of Antiquities for the city government or *Governatorato*. He exercised oversight of the major projects within the historic core including the Largo Argentina, the Via del Mare, the Via dei Trionfi, the Via dell’Impero, and the Tomb of Augustus. He also carried out the restoration of some major churches such as San Giorgio in Velabro and the Aventine Hill’s Santa Sabina. Muñoz contributed articles frequently to the monthly *Capitolium*, the *Governatorato*’s chronicle of the fascist transformation of the city.

Muñoz supervised widening the Via di San Gregorio into the new fascist Via dei Trionfi, running between the Palatine and Caelian Hills from the Colosseum and the Arch of Constantine to the Circus Maximus. The fountain he designed near the arch remains there today diagonally across from the fragment of an ancient aqueduct, the extension of the Aqua Claudia that brought water to the Palatine. This thoroughfare recalled the triumphal routes of Roman emperors and generals as they entered the city. After its inauguration on October 28, 1933, it became part of the parade route for the regime, most famously on the occasion of Hitler’s visit to Rome in May 1938.

To complete the circuit beginning and ending at the Victor Emmanuel and the Piazza Venezia, the government cleared the Circus Maximus and constructed a new Via del Circo Massimo on the slope of the Aventine Hill. By 1934 an unsightly miscellany of shacks and elements of the city gas works filled the site where once thousands of Romans witnessed chariot races. Clearance of these structures took place in September and October. Work on the new street included removing bodies from the Jewish Cemetery on the Aventine and reintering them in the Campo Verano. A plaque with a Hebrew inscription stands on the site of the cemetery which, after World War II, became Rome’s municipal rose garden.

At the summit of the new street the regime constructed the semicircular Piazzale Romolo e Remo that offered a panoramic view of the Circus Maximus and the Palatine Hill. The plan to place a monument to Giuseppe Mazzini there went unfulfilled until after World War II. From the piazzale, the street descended to the Piazza Bocca della Verità and the two temples. Mussolini led the parade of 15,000 athletes inaugurating his latest project on October 28, 1934.

From the temples, pedestrians proceed toward the Victor Emmanuel on the Via del Mare, past the Theater of Marcellus on the left and the Capitoline Hill on the right. The work to isolate the Capitoline finished in 1939 with the demolition of housing on the southern slope facing the Church of Santa Maria

della Consolazione. Pictures at the time show residents standing in front of slum-like buildings about to give way to the fascist pick axe, the *piccone*. In 1938 the regime installed the paving on the Campidoglio that was part of Michelangelo's design. A more fascist touch had been added in the 1920s with the altar to the fascist "fallen," the Ara dei Caduti Fascisti, next to the Senate building and overlooking the Arch of Septimius Severus. This new monument provided a fascist counterpart to the Tomb of the Unknown at the Victor Emmanuel, but it disappeared after the liberation of Rome in 1944.

In 1934 the regime had completed another "isolation" of an ancient monument: the Castel Sant'Angelo, the tomb of Hadrian. In order to expose this fortress, demolition created open space for a park surrounding it. New lighting meant spectacular illumination at night. One article linked this project to other recent ones: "Via dell'Impero, Via del Mare, Via dei Trionfi, the isolation of the Mole Adriana signals four fundamental points in the development of Mussolinian Rome. These new streets opened among the sacred ruins have revealed hidden magnificence and have carried the dynamism of modern life among the glories of the past giving perhaps, an urban function to the ruins" (Painter 2005, 36).

Some of these fascist transformations of the historic center had been foreshadowed by planners before fascism. Fascists boasted of their ability to put into action what others had only talked about. Mussolini claimed that fascism cared less for ideas and abstractions than accomplishing concrete deeds. He also sought to demonstrate his regime's ability to construct bold new projects that embodied the spirit of *romanità* in new spaces beyond the historic center. The first major effort of this sort began in 1928 with work on a sports complex dedicated to the Duce himself: the Foro Mussolini.

The Foro Mussolini, today the Foro Italico, sits below Monte Mario north of the Vatican. It includes two stadiums, tennis courts and buildings with a swimming pool, Mussolini's personal gymnasium and offices, all dominated by a marble obelisk rising 75 feet (22 meters) into the sky inscribed with "Mussolini" on one side and "Dux" on another. The path from this "Monolito" to the stadiums led to a series of mosaics displaying fascist slogans and deeds, an example of the fascist use of ancient forms for modern purposes (Stone 1999, 211). Throughout the complex, images of ancient Roman physical prowess mixed with modern sports and modern notions of physical vigor and health. These facilities were intended for the Balilla, the major group for boys, where fascist youth could fulfill the ancient ideal of Greece and Rome to strengthen mind and body. The initial architect for this "sports city" was Enrico Del Debbio. When Del Debbio died in 1935, Luigi Moretti replaced him.

The first buildings opened in 1932 as part of the *decennale*. Work continued until it was interrupted by World War II. The larger of the two stadiums underwent changes for the 1960 Olympics and the World Cup matches in

1990. The smaller stadium has remained untouched. Known as the Stadio dei Marmi, it seats 20,000 spectators who are surrounded by large marble male athletes whose muscular physiques embodied the fascist ideal of physical development. Opened in 1932, the regime used this space for displays of physical prowess by athletes and military personnel.

Moretti designed the fencing academy, the Casa delle Armi, at one end of the complex and across the street from the new youth hostel. Finished in 1936, it remains a striking example of the architect's modern, rationalist style. Mussolini never supported one particular style for fascism, allowing architects representing differing schools to compete for his favor. This eclecticism has appropriately earned the name "aesthetic pluralism" (Stone 1998, 5–8, 65–70).

Moretti also designed another stylistically modern building for the Balilla in Trastevere adjacent to Porta Portese, completed in 1936. The Balilla had become part of the reorganized youth organization, Gioventù Italiana del Littorio, hence the Casa del GIL. The facility provided space for health programs, sports and recreation as well as offices. Given the limited size of the site, Moretti designed a six-storey tower to provide adequate space for all these activities. The GIL building had a movie theater on one side and a playhouse on the other that were part of fascism's leisure program, the Dopolavoro. Together these buildings provided a center of sports and recreational activities in the heart of one of Rome's best-known neighborhoods.

The fascist revolution aimed to create a new Italian embodying hard work, discipline, physical prowess and mental agility. A new generation steeped in these supposedly Roman virtues would serve the nation and strengthen its military. Therefore the regime boasted not only of its sports facilities and organizations for youth, but its new schools as symbols of change and modernity. The new university campus completed in 1935 served as the largest and most visible example.

Previous governments had talked of moving Rome's university, La Sapienza, from buildings scattered about the center to a new site beyond Termini, the main train station. Once again, the fascists could boast that they got the job done. The chief planner was Mussolini's favorite architect, Marcello Piacentini, who gathered a diverse group of architects representing different styles to plan the individual buildings for the various faculties.

Piacentini subscribed to the Duce's vision of a transformed Rome based on "grandeur and necessity." His own buildings combined modern elements incorporating classical and Roman motifs that he believed made for a suitably fascist style. He edited the monthly magazine of the National Syndicate of Fascist Architects, *Architettura*, from its inception in 1932. Other architects such as Giuseppe Terragni, Enrico Del Debbio, Luigi Moretti, Adalberto

Libera, and Mario De Renzi favored a more modern, rationalist and international style. The chief spokesman for the latter approach was Giuseppe Pagano, who edited his own architectural journal, *Casabella*. Pagano opposed any tendency toward an overblown and rhetorical style that used “archaeological forms” (Painter 2005, 61) at the expense of rationality, simplicity, and functionality.

Piacentini managed to broker differing points of view when gathering a team of architects to design the *città universitaria*:

To his credit [Piacentini]...chose several architects whose talents had yet to be confirmed: Giuseppe Pagano, Gio Ponti, Pietro Aschieri, Gaetano Minnucci, Giuseppe Capponi and Giovanni Michelucci. The buildings share materials (travertine, brick and stucco) and relatively low-rise profiles, but individual architects experimented with courtyards, portals, porticos, and massing and, in the case of Capponi’s Botany School, extensive glazing, or broad curved surfaces as in Ponti’s Mathematics School (Ghirardo 1991, 18).

Arnaldo Foschini designed the monumental colonnaded entrance that led straight to the central administration building of Piacentini. The first buildings inside the entrance were dedicated to the sciences, including Pagano’s for Physics. Despite the individual designs the campus had a certain symmetry and coherence. The English-language magazine of the regime’s tourist agency boasted that “In the University City, Fascist architecture will show that only that art that serves the great ideas can accomplish great undertakings” (Painter 2005, 66).

Schools on all levels from elementary to university stood at the center of the fascist drive to produce a new generation of fascist Italians. The mix of educational institutions included the *scuola all’aperta* or outdoor school emphasizing physical development with plenty of sunshine, exercise and nourishing food. One example rose on the Aventine Hill in 1925 bearing the name of Italy’s most famous school teacher, Rosa Mussolini, the Duce’s mother. Yet another type was the vocational school like the one that opened on the Via Taranto just east of the Lateran in 1931 with programs for both boys and girls. A new neighborhood often featured a new elementary school. The large Piazza Domenico Sauli occupied a central location in the working-class suburb of Garbatella, south of the historic center. A new school bearing the name of fascist leader Michele Bianchi provided 51 schoolrooms divided between those for boys and girls.

Two prominent examples illustrate the high school or *liceo*. The Liceo Virgilio stands on the Lungotevere across the street from the Ponte Mazzini. The four-storey structure opened in 1937 with 56 classrooms, a gymnasium, and large auditorium. In the same year, the Liceo Ginnasio Giulio Cesare

opened in a new neighborhood between the Via Salaria and the Via Nomentana with similar facilities and a curriculum that included physics, chemistry and natural history.

Fascist themes permeated the curriculum in the texts, slogans and subjects presented with a decidedly fascist twist whenever possible. Students from pre-school to university enrolled in the appropriate fascist youth organization. They all learned at an early age the fascist oath: “In the name of God and Italy, I swear to carry out the orders of the Duce and to serve with all my strength and, if necessary, with my blood, the cause of the Fascist Revolution.”

Romans of all ages encountered new fascist buildings as they went about their daily lives. Prominent examples were the four major post offices built during the 1930s on Via Marmorata, Via Taranto, Piazza Bologna and the Viale Mazzini. Well known architects designed them in various modern styles, the most notable being the Aventine post office on the Via Marmorata adjacent to the Porta San Paolo and the Pyramid of Caius Cestius. Work began to replace Rome’s main train station, Termini. The sides of the new station employ a motif of Roman arches, but the plan for a classically inspired columned façade went unfinished and today’s entrance was designed and built after the war. The regime did complete the new Ostiense train station just beyond the Porta San Paolo in time for Hitler’s arrival in May 1938. It included mosaics of the Roman Empire “framed by a Roman triumphal arch ...and was designed to make a clear statement about Fascist pride in the idea of empire and in the importance ...of linking the ‘vitality of the Italian people’ with the greatness of Rome” (Minor 1999, 159).

Mussolini’s accommodation with the Vatican in 1929 represented yet another “great undertaking” by overcoming the division between the Italian state and the Roman Catholic Church. When Italy took Rome from the pope in 1870 and declared it the capital of the nation, Pius IX refused to recognize the state, threatened Catholics who participated in politics with excommunication and declared himself a “prisoner in the Vatican.” Relations between church and state had softened by the advent of a fascist government in 1922. Shortly thereafter, Mussolini made overtures to the Vatican that led to the Lateran Accords in 1929. The agreement included a financial settlement, the recognition of Vatican City as a sovereign state and a concordat recognizing the special position of the Church in Italian life. The fascist Third Rome had formed a formal relationship with the Christian Second Rome that both Italians and foreigners greeted favorably.

Mussolini decided to commemorate this accomplishment by constructing a broad new street running from the Tiber straight up to St. Peter’s, the Via della Conciliazione (Kostof 1973, 70–71). Once again the fascist *piccone* set about the destruction of the neighborhood, forcing its residents to resettle as the regime made another dramatic change in the urban landscape. The Duce

made the symbolic first blow with the ax to set the project in motion on October 28, 1936. The major work got done by 1938, but did not reach completion until after the war in time for the Holy Year of 1950.

Another project of 1936 included Mussolini's only incursion into the Piazza Navona. The central piece, the new Corso del Rinascimento, ran from the Corso Vittorio Emanuele in front of the Church of San Andrea della Valle alongside the Piazza Navona. The small piazza facing San Andrea has Latin inscriptions extolling the glories of the fascist empire. At the far end of the new Corso, as it curves to the Via Zanardelli, the regime demolished a section on the Piazza Navona and replaced it with a brick fascist-style building exposing remnants of the original stadium of Domitian and open for tourists to descend to the original level (Painter 2005, 70–71).

A major and obvious goal of *romanità* intertwined the images of Mussolini and Augustus. To this end, the Duce announced in 1934 twin projects to prepare for the two-thousandth anniversary of the birth of Augustus in 1937: the creation of a new piazza to expose the tomb of Augustus and the opening of a commemorative exhibition, the Mostra Augustea della Romanità. His declaration on the initiation of demolition sums up the fascist rationale for transforming the city as a whole: "The work of isolating the Augusteo, which today I initiate and that must be finished within three years for the bimillennium of Augustus, has a triple utility: that of history and beauty, that of traffic, that of hygiene.... A fourth and not final use: this work of demolition and of construction of new buildings gives work for three years to numerous workers of every sort. And now I give the word to the pickax" (Painter 2005, 73).

Thus, Rome gained the vast piazza surrounding the liberated tomb still known today as the Piazza Augusto Imperatore. Antonio Muñoz supervised the restoration of the mausoleum which at the time housed a concert hall. Some thought that Mussolini intended it as his final resting place. The architect Vittorio Morpurgo designed the massive buildings with their Roman symbols and Latin inscriptions. The mausoleum work finished in time for the 1937 celebrations, and construction on the piazza continued until 1941. A major piece of the project was Augustus's Altar of Peace, the Ara Pacis, housed in a simple glass structure and completed in 1938. Today the piazza accommodates a number of bus routes and houses some fashionable restaurants. The Ara Pacis now rests in a recently designed structure by American architect Richard Meier. Modern architectural critics have found the piazza one of Mussolini's less successful creations both for its ponderous style and failure to convey the intended message: "Our opinion of Augustus is not affected by the association with Mussolini, and our opinion of Mussolini is not enhanced. The Duce yields to the emperor and is lost. The Piazzale, in the end remains a colossal mistake" (Kostof 1978, 322).

The Mostra Augustea della Romanità opened on September 23, 1937, on the

broad Via Nazionale in the Palazzo delle Esposizioni which sported a new façade for the occasion. This central location between the Piazza Venezia and the Termini station had housed the successful Mostra della Rivoluzione Fascista for two years, 1932 to 1934. The new exhibition contained reproductions and models of imperial Roman artifacts and drew large crowds. A large model or *plastico* showed Rome at the time of Constantine's reign. The *plastico* and all the objects in the exhibit were transferred to the Museum of Roman Civilization a few years later in EUR, fascism's new city south of the center, where they remain today. Tourists are familiar with the pictures of the *plastico* showing the sites of ancient Rome on popular guide books.

Fascism's transformation of Rome included a series of cities: changes to the historic city, a new sports city at the Foro Mussolini, a cinema city at Cinecittà to produce fascist films (see Cyrino, [Chapter 35](#) in this volume), new cities in the Agro Pontino after draining its marshes, and, most ambitious of all, a new city to house the Esposizione Universale di Roma (EUR), projected for 1942 to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the March on Rome.

Today, travelers arriving at Leonardo da Vinci airport view the most prominent buildings of EUR on the route to the center of the city. The site offered planners open space to create a truly fascist city for the 1942 exposition that would be a permanent addition to the Third Rome. An article in Piacentini's *Architettura* declared: "From its birth it is essentially *permanent* in character, in contrast to all other world exhibitions, which have been ephemeral in character and have disappeared after the manifestation had attained its end" (Painter [2005](#), 127).

Mussolini turned again to Piacentini to serve as chief architect. He pursued an eclectic approach that ultimately yielded a mix of styles from modern to traditional, including the sort of monumental columned structures Giuseppe Pagano criticized. EUR demonstrated once again the "aesthetic pluralism" that characterized the policies of the regime.

The signature building stands on the highest and most prominent site of the new city. It is the so-called "Colosseo Quadrato," the Square Colosseum, because of its six stories of arches. Its official title, Palazzo della Civiltà Italiana, bespoke the great achievements of Italians summed up in the inscription running across the top of the building: "A People of Poets, Artists, Saints, Thinkers, Scientists, Sailors, Explorers." This building "did effect a workable marriage of modernist architecture and the ancient tradition of imperial Rome" (Bondanella [1987](#), 205).

Directly down the street stands the Palazzo dei Congressi, the Palace of Congresses, designed by Adalberto Libera. Completed after the war, it continues today as a place for large meetings and exhibits. At the opposite end of EUR from the Square Colosseum sits the Church of SS Peter and Paul, a centrally planned church of intermediate size, but with a large, highly visible

dome. Another major structure housed the headquarters for EUR. Publio Morbiducci designed the L-shaped building whose covered main entrance boasts a remarkable example of fascist *romanità*: a sculpted relief depicting the history of the building of Rome. It begins with Romulus and Remus at the top and moves through history with scenes of ancient Rome, St. Peter's, Garibaldi and finally Mussolini on a horse, arm outstretched in the fascist salute.

Other buildings begun before construction ceased during the war in 1942 included the Museum of Roman Civilization with the famous *plastico* found just beyond the entrance. Two other museums nearby are the Museum of Folk Art and Traditions and the Museum of Prehistoric Ethnography. Scholars studying modern Italy are familiar with the Archivio Centrale dello Stato that faces the long axis of the Viale Europa. Originally it housed offices of the Italian army. EUR today also has Rome's only skyscrapers, all built after World War II, such as headquarters for Alitalia and IBM as well as Pier Luigi Nervi's Palazzo dello Sport built for the 1960 Olympics. The broad axial avenues and open space of EUR made it originally the perfect location for a new fascist Rome constructed without the constraints of the historic city. After fascism, it offered a new location for government and business to expand horizontally and vertically. It even had room for suburban residential housing with that most unusual of Roman dwellings: single-family houses.

In the 1930s Rome pulsed with the energy of constant activity that Mussolini hoped would convince foreigners and his fellow Italians of the emergence of a new and vibrant city exemplifying his fascist revolution (Atkinson 1998, 13–14). Demolition and construction dotted the city. Parades and ceremonies occurred with regularity. In all of it, the new Rome took inspiration from and paid tribute to the greatness of its past. One visitor from Prague came away with just the impression the regime sought to convey by noting that entire quarters had disappeared to uncover imperial Rome. Mussolini “redeems the remains of the ancient Empire and at the same time creates a new one” (Painter 2005, 38).

Mussolini did not want *romanità* equated with antiquarianism. Fascists and their Futurist supporters spurned the image of Rome as a museum for tourists. The Roman foundations, literally and figuratively, must inspire the new generation to chart a fascist path to the modern world. To that end, the city constantly sponsored public activities that historians have come to call “fascist spectacle” (Falasca-Zamponi 1997, *passim*).

A prime example of such spectacle, the Mostra della Rivoluzione Fascista, opened in 1932 at the same time as the Via dell'Impero as part of the *decennale* celebrating the tenth anniversary of the March on Rome (Stone 1993). The façade of the Palazzo delle Esposizioni on the Via Nazionale was transformed to feature bold metal columns in the shape of the fascist symbol, the Roman *fascies*. Mussolini ordered the many artists and architects to design

a “most modern” exhibition inside as well. Originally to stay open for six months, its popularity extended the time to two years and attracted nearly four million visitors. Officials brought distinguished visitors to see it, and the Fascist Party apparatus subsidized trips to Rome by thousands of Italians to see the MRF and the wonders of the emerging fascist Rome. Every day the honor guard changed to a different organization after a parade up the Via Nazionale.

Of equal success were the exhibitions quartered in the cleared space of the Circus Maximus between 1937 and 1940. Here the regime could demonstrate its accomplishments in the heart of Rome: “Between the Palatine Hill and the Aventine Hill, on the ruins of the Circus Maximus, the Fascist party constructed an exhibition city which connected Fascist advances in autarchy, healthcare and recreation to historical Roman triumphs. ...Each of these used monumental architecture, sculpture and the surrounding Roman ruins to forge a Romanized cult of military strength and national resurgence” (Stone 1999, 217). The thousands of visitors who flocked to these exhibits would also see the Obelisk of Axum brought from Ethiopia and set up at the southern end of the circus in 1937.

During the fascist *ventennio* Rome’s population reached and surpassed the estimates of imperial Rome’s population, going from 700,000 in 1921 to 1,415,000 in 1941. The regime sponsored housing for all classes and income levels that brought a frenzy of construction from public housing in Testaccio, the Janiculum, Prati and Garbatella to expensive apartments in Parioli. The Governatorato moved thousands of the displaced workers from the demolished neighborhoods well outside the city center to newly constructed housing. These settlements or *borgate* afforded housing, clinics and schools far superior to the slums they left behind or so the regime claimed. The reality fell short of these boasts. The remote locations made it more difficult for residents to get to jobs in the city and easier for the authorities to keep an eye on these common folk always suspected of harboring left-wing political sentiments.

Mussolini employed additional Roman symbolism in the late 1930s in an effort to stiffen the backs of Italians and galvanize them for the ever-increasing possibility of war. To the stiff-armed Roman salute of fascism he added the Roman marching step, the “passo romano,” that looked suspiciously like the German goose step. In the same year, 1938, that Mussolini hosted Hitler in Rome he added race to *romanità* by imposing anti-Semitic laws to emphasize that Italians descended from the Romans and that Jews as outsiders threatened the fascist empire (Stone 1999, 209; Nelis 2007, 401). The third and final version of the Mostra della Rivoluzione Fascista in 1942 featured a Cinema Room that included idealized Roman visages juxtaposed with modern Italians with similar features. A large photograph showed dejected, defeated black French colonial troops captured when France fell to the Germans in

1940. A whole room was dedicated to the threat of Jews and Masons (Painter 2005, 138–9).

Fascism's creation of its new Rome came to a halt soon after Italy entered the war on June 10, 1940. Italian military reverses led to Mussolini's ouster on July 25, 1943, followed swiftly by German occupation of the country as the Allies conquered Sicily and invaded the peninsula. Mussolini's Rome became Hitler's Rome from September 8, 1943 to June 4, 1944. The first resistance to the German takeover took place in the area of the Porta San Paolo, the Pyramid of Caius Cestius, the Protestant Cemetery and the fascist-constructed Aventine Post Office on the Via Mamorata. Elements of the Italian army and ordinary Roman citizens took on the invading Germans. Today the area is festooned with plaques commemorating the armed resistance and the liberation of Rome on June 4, 1944.

Following World War II, Rome made efforts to erase symbols of Mussolini's Rome. The Foro Mussolini became the Foro Italico; the Via dell'Impero became the Via dei Fori Imperiali; the Viale Adolfo Hitler became the Viale Cave Ardeatine, commemorating the 335 victims of a Nazi reprisal buried in the Ardeatine Caves. In other cases removal of the *fasces* from buildings or the chipping out of Mussolini's name from columns commemorating some of his projects and other cosmetic changes took place. Nevertheless, the major changes of the fascist epoch remain. For better or worse, the Third Rome of Mussolini is interwoven into the fabric of imperial and papal Rome.

Guide to Further Reading

The revulsion against fascism after 1945 led to several decades of neglect of serious study of Rome's transformation by Mussolini. Change came initially with the work of architectural historians: Kostoff 1973, Ciucci 1987, 1989 and Ghirardo 1980, 1991, 1992. Stone 1998 gave an account of fascist cultural policy that puts the changes to Rome in the proper historical context. Painter 2005 offers a synthesis of Rome's transformation during fascism. Gentile 2007 integrates Mussolini's Rome with fascist ideology and the totalitarian pretensions of Mussolini's regime.

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CHAPTER THIRTY-FIVE

The City of Ancient Rome on Screen

Monica S. Cyrino

Since the dawn of cinema in the early twentieth century, filmmakers have sought to recreate the city of ancient Rome on indoor soundstages, open-air urban sets and vast outdoor locations. The metropolitan spaces of ancient Rome, taken together with its suburban vicinities and nearby rural landscapes, serve as a rich setting for numerous films and, later, television productions, ranging from the familiar historical epics and mythological narratives, to adaptations of ancient literature, and even to comedies and documentaries. Enormously popular, artistically prestigious, and both critically lauded and commercially successful, films and television series set in the city of ancient Rome are a mainstay of contemporary popular media and entertainment.

So it is no surprise that filmmakers and television producers regularly return to Roman antiquity as a persistent, powerful source for historical and mythological models to be celebrated on the screen, as well as for negative paradigms to be confronted, censured or covertly enjoyed (Bondanella 1987, 207–51; Wyke 1997, 1–33; Solomon 2001, 47–99). The city of Rome itself – and, just as often, sets designed and constructed to represent the ancient city – continues to play a starring role as the ideal physical site for all the most iconic and extravagant set pieces that the epic cinema uses to portray the spectacle of Roman pomp, grandeur, and wealth: impressive scenes such as military triumphs and chariot races, lavish banquets and orgies, and brutal games in the arena. We in the audience are invited to experience the cinematic depiction of the ancient city of Rome as it is deployed to support political goals, to explore social issues or to engage in cultural debates about the modern world’s relationship to our classical past (Cyrino 2005, 1–6). We also frequently see the city of Rome as a backdrop for adventure and romance, and are titillated in viewing the luxury, debauchery and sexual excess famously endorsed and savored within the city’s walls. Thus filmmakers and television producers, depending on how and where they choose to recreate the ancient city of Rome, and whether or not they choose to face the questions of historical accuracy and aesthetic authenticity, reveal various artistic and technological strategies as they seek to idealize, archaize, romanticize and politicize the image of the ancient capital of the world.

Early Cinema

The first cinematic recreations of the city of ancient Rome often took their narratives, plots and characters from nineteenth-century popular historical novels set in antiquity (Elley 1984, 17; Solomon 2001, 3). In particular, stories partially or wholly set in late Republican or early imperial periods of ancient Rome enjoyed widespread fame and popularity. Novels such as Lew Wallace's *Ben-Hur: A Tale of the Christ* (1880) and Henryk Sienkiewicz's *Quo Vadis?* (1896) – both huge bestsellers that were translated into multiple languages – generated massive commercial profits while earning numerous favorable reviews, and by the turn of the century had been read by millions of people. With their rousing narratives and appealing visual aesthetics, these popular historical “toga” novels were often spectacularly adapted for the dramatic stage in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Because their epic historical and romantic scope offered enormous potential for spectacular visual effects, and with their proven popularity certain to attract large numbers of ticket-buying spectators, these historical novels were also soon adapted for the big screen by pioneering film directors, especially in Italy and the United States (Cyrino 2005, 18).

The best “toga” novels often included lavishly detailed physical descriptions of the look and layout of the ancient city of Rome that surely influenced the earliest screenwriters, set designers and art directors as they endeavored to reconstruct authentic versions of Rome to serve as eye-catching backdrops for their films. Furthermore, photographs of theatrical productions and, to a lesser extent, descriptions of them in critical reviews, may also have influenced the pioneers in the early Italian and American film industries (Solomon 2001, 3–5). Soon the new aggressive technology of cinema would trump the restrictions of the conventional stage, by shedding the confines of the indoor theater and exploiting the opportunities for shooting in larger and more authentic outdoor locations. The first filmmakers immediately grasped the commercial and artistic potential in using the cinema to evoke the ancient past, and so naturally they were drawn to the large-scale epic format. It was from these early films that the cinematic image of the city of ancient Rome first emerged, and right at the outset the visual vocabulary for representing the city – with its monumental architecture, opulent décor, long gleaming colonnades, expansive boulevards, magnificent arenas, and abundant throngs of richly costumed people – was manifestly established on screen.

During the so-called Golden Age of Italian silent cinema, roughly between 1900 and 1920, dozens of epics set in ancient Rome were filmed. Italy's productions in this initial period enjoyed great popularity and success abroad, especially in the United States, as the films' silent captions could be easily exchanged from one language to another (Elley 1984, 17). Among the many films that could be cited, two Italian-made silent-era evocations of Roman antiquity onscreen deserve to be mentioned here as important aesthetic

influences on later cinematic depictions of key locations and events situated within the ancient city. Director Enrico Guazzoni, known as the “Italian spectacle king,” produced several Roman-themed epics in the two decades before the trend for silent films died out. After purchasing the rights to Sienkiewicz’s novel in 1912, Guazzoni produced his enormously popular feature-length (nearly two hours) historical epic *Quo Vadis?* (1912), which was filmed on location in Rome and claimed the biggest sets and cast of any film made up to that time (Elley 1984, 124–5; Solomon 2001, 207). Though shot with a static camera, the finished film is a virtuoso cinematographic display of Guazzoni’s training as an artist and designer. Above all, the film’s spectacular and thrilling scenes in the Roman arena, where gladiators saluted the emperor and Christian martyrs were sent to their deaths in front of a vast crowd of excited Roman spectators, established a clear visual precedent for all such grand arena sequences in later films and television series set in ancient Rome, such as *Quo Vadis* (1951), *Ben-Hur* (1959), *Gladiator* (2000) and *Spartacus: Blood and Sand* (2010).

Two years later, Guazzoni made *Caio Giulio Cesare* (*Julius Caesar*, 1914), a documentary-style film that traces the life of Julius Caesar from his marriage to Cornelia in 83 BCE down to his assassination in 44 BCE, which was also filmed on location in Rome (Solomon 2001, 58–9). The film boasts a number of exceptional shots during the battle scenes set in Gaul, where the conquered Gallic chieftain Vercingetorix bows low to kiss Caesar’s foot, and later in Pharsalia, where the victorious Caesar stands on the beach in darkly shadowed profile as Pompey’s ships escape on the seas beyond him. But the most striking and significant urban scene in terms of its later cinematic influence is the return of Caesar to Rome in a magnificent triumph sequence set in the Roman Forum. In a lavish parade of infantry and cavalry, SPQR standards and Roman eagles, priests, lictors and senators, Caesar himself appears riding atop a horse-drawn float, as people wave from the building portals (Solomon 2001, 59). This early silent-era film sequence, with its myriad specific visual details of setting, cast and embellishment, set an extravagant and costly standard for all subsequent Roman triumph scenes in the mid-century epics, such as those in *Quo Vadis* (1951), *Ben-Hur* (1959) and *Cleopatra* (1963), as well as in more recent films and television series such as *Gladiator* (2000) and *Rome* (2005–2007). Guazzoni’s epics, along with other early films like Giovanni Pastrone’s definitive screen epic *Cabiria* (1914), had a huge artistic impact on the way the later film industry depicted the city of ancient Rome onscreen, especially the triumph and arena scenes. With their technological innovations, spectacular effects and massive sets, these early silent epics established an association between the ancient Roman cityscape and films of lavish, gigantic scope.

Only one film history of ancient Rome emerged out of Fascist Italy, Carmine Gallone’s *Scipione l’Africano* (*Scipio Africanus*, 1937), a pompous,

nationalistic film that was generously subsidized by the totalitarian regime of Benito Mussolini and blatantly offered a cinematic justification for his African campaign (Solomon 2001, 49). While the film's narrative setting reaches back to the Second Punic War in Carthage, Mussolini's propaganda picture marks an important contemporary milestone in the practical history of the entire Roman epic genre. In 1936, Mussolini commissioned the construction of a colossal new studio complex at Cinecittà, five miles south-east of the city center of Rome, with the intention of using film to promote the nation of Italy and current fascist ideals (See Painter, Chapter 34 in this volume): the studio's slogan was "Il cinema è l'arma più forte" or "Cinema is the most powerful weapon." The studio complex was designed by one of the great Italian architects of the time, Gino Peressutti, and remains one of the most striking examples of modernist architecture in all of Europe. When first opened in April 1937, Cinecittà was designed to be an all-inclusive production center, offering full service facilities for the production of films – sound stages, offices, dressing rooms, warehouses, prop workshops – as well as state-of-the-art post-production facilities for film processing, printing and editing, sound mixing, and even conservation and restoration. On Cinecittà's rambling 25-acre back lot, massive sets representing the Roman Forum were built for *Scipione l'Africano*. Within the next six years, nearly 300 historical dramas and propaganda films were shot at the new studios, made possible by recent Italian laws designed to support native film production. Soon the studios at Cinecittà would become the quintessential location for making films set in the city of ancient Rome.

Cinema's Golden Age

The golden age of Hollywood reached its peak with the ancient-themed epics of the 1950s and early 1960s, and once again the city of ancient Rome became a focal point for the action and settings of these impressive, big-budget films. Because of the welcome post-war economic recovery and the willingness of grateful audiences to pay attention to movies again, filmmakers of this period produced a veritable boom in epic spectacles set in Roman antiquity. But there was an even more pressing reason for the rapid growth of expensive, innovative epic cinema: film companies were confronted by the urgent financial necessity of dealing with the competition posed by the new upstart medium of television (Solomon 2001, 13–14). Thus, films about ancient Rome – with their lavish visual aesthetics, sexy narratives and cutting-edge cinematic technologies – became the best way for film entrepreneurs to lure people away from their living rooms and back into movie theaters. Many of these epic films were shot in contemporary Rome on location at the ancient

sites or on nearby sets where the city of ancient Rome was reconstructed; while other films were shot in places that look like, or were designed and built to look like, the city of ancient Rome.

Several important mid-century films were produced at Cinecittà. After being looted and bombed during World War II, the studios at Cinecittà were refurbished in the early 1950s and soon began attracting American film companies and directors in search of both creative local cinematic talent as well as less expensive production facilities. During the glittering 15-year period that followed, many classic American films were made, and soon the studios at Cinecittà became known as “Hollywood on the Tiber.” Production on films such as William Wyler’s *Roman Holiday* (1953) and Jean Negulesco’s *Three Coins in the Fountain* (1954) took advantage of both the newly restored facilities at Cinecittà and the many opportunities for on-site location shooting in the city of Rome itself. But it was the extravagant production of the epic spectacles set in ancient Rome, including *Quo Vadis* (1951), *Ben-Hur* (1959), and *Cleopatra* (1963), that made the studio famous, and in one particular case, infamous.

One of the first American productions shot on location at Cinecittà and in and around the city of Rome was MGM’s *Quo Vadis* (1951) directed by Mervyn LeRoy, representing yet another film version of Sienkiewicz’s popular novel (Elley 1984, 125–6; Solomon 2001, 217–21; Cyrino 2005, 7–33). LeRoy’s film is a robustly spectacular and authentic-looking recreation of the story of the Great Fire of Rome and Nero’s subsequent persecution of the early Christians. Shot in brilliant Technicolor on a budget of over \$7 million, *Quo Vadis* showcases numerous sunlit outdoor locations and rich interior sets, yet the film meticulously avoids the ornate gaudiness often evident in the art direction of other historical epics. In the opening scene, Rome’s trademark umbrella pine trees are magnificently on display as the returning commander Marcus Vinicius drives his chariot into the city at breakneck pace to Nero’s opulent imperial villa on the Palatine. The film’s fine indoor spaces are adapted to evoke the specific mood of each scene, from the gilded splendor of Nero’s palace, to the elegant Hellenic minimalism of Petronius’s literary salon, to the rustic courtyard of the simple suburban home of the retired general Plautius.

But LeRoy’s stunning and dramatic exterior set pieces provide the film’s most powerful visual impact. During the dazzling triumph scene, the victorious Vinicius and his legions enter the Roman Forum under a rain of rose petals, while throngs of extras cheer him on and Nero watches warily from the purple-draped imperial loggia. For the Great Fire sequence, a 1/12 scale model of the city was assembled inside a 300 square-foot tank and then ignited with hundreds of alcohol burners as the cameras rolled: this single special effect cost the then-staggering sum of \$100,000. In the second half of the film, LeRoy stages a series of martyrdom tableaux in the 60,000-seat arena

he had built to replicate the Circus Maximus. One spectacle in the arena exhibits a bedraggled group of hymn-singing Christians graphically mauled by lions, while in a rare nighttime show the martyrs are bound to crosses and set ablaze. In each of these sensational exterior sequences that take place in the city, the camera assumes the viewpoint of the spectators as they witness the triumph in the Forum, the fire in the urban buildings, and the martyrs in the arena. Just so, the cinema audience watching *Quo Vadis* views the physical city of ancient Rome as an essential actor in the plot of the film.

Arguably one of the finest and most critically acclaimed films ever made, William Wyler's *Ben-Hur* (1959) was also shot at Cinecittà in Rome and on location in the Italian countryside (Elley 1984, 131–5; Solomon 2001, 205–13; Cyrino 2005, 59–88). Even after the success of *Quo Vadis*, *Ben-Hur* was a huge financial risk for MGM: at a cost of over \$15 million, it was the most expensive movie produced to date. As a cinematic experience, *Ben-Hur* is both intensely rousing and quietly reserved, boasting the widescreen blockbuster appeal of thrilling action sequences and spectacular sets, alongside the film's refined art direction and luminous visual symbolism. Although the main action of *Ben-Hur* is set in the Roman province of Judaea, there are a few critical scenes at the center of the film that take place in the ancient city of Rome.

The film's protagonist, the Jewish aristocrat Judah Ben-Hur, is on a journey of vengeance against his former boyhood friend, Messala, who represents the inexorable power of Rome. After Judah is arrested on trumped-up charges and sent into slavery on a Roman galley, he is unshackled during a sea battle and saves the life of the Roman naval commander, Quintus Arrius, who, in gratitude, takes him to Rome and adopts him as his own son. The proud and fatherly Arrius insists that Judah ride next to him in his chariot, and the two enter the Roman Forum together in a magnificent triumph sequence – enhanced by an exceptional matte-painting technique used to increase the size of the Forum and multiply the number of extras in the crowd – that culminates at the feet of the emperor Tiberius. Later, during a celebration at Arrius's sumptuous urban villa, shot on an elaborate set with 45 separate water fountains and real Roman socialites playing party guests, Judah reluctantly tells Arrius he must return to Jerusalem to fulfill his destiny. These two scenes set in the city of Rome and placed at the heart of the film represent Judah's potential reconciliation with Roman paternal authority, yet Judah ultimately rejects his filial bond with Arrius and thus with Rome itself.

Cleopatra (1963), directed by Joseph Mankiewicz for 20th-Century Fox, was one of the most expensive (\$35 million), longest, most publicized, and most controversial films ever made, but it is also undeniably one of the most spectacular (Elley 1984, 93–5; Solomon 2001, 67–75; Cyrino 2005, 121–58). The production of *Cleopatra* began at Pinewood Studios outside of London, where budget problems, cold weather and the fragile health of star Elizabeth

Taylor caused numerous delays. Later the film shoot was transferred to Cinecittà in Rome: it was here that the scandalous love affair between Taylor and co-star Richard Burton became public knowledge and was then, not surprisingly, used to publicize the film. While the majority of the film's interior and exterior sets are supposed to represent Cleopatra's lavish royal palace at Alexandria in Egypt, or her celebrated barge at Tarsus, there is one extravagant scene set in the ancient city of Rome that will forever be hailed by viewers and critics as a pinnacle of the cinematic art and imagination (Solomon 2001, 74).

The scene of Cleopatra's dramatic, stunning, and ostentatious entrance into the Roman Forum, reconstructed on a massive scale at Cinecittà, cost almost a million dollars to shoot, and goes on for seven full minutes of constant and dazzling activity. Around the square, the camera occupies several different viewpoints to take in the full spectacle, including a procession of white horses, musicians, chariots, archers, dancers, zebras, elephants, and gold-winged women, as they all pass under a recreation of the Arch of Constantine – a handsome anachronism, as it was built three centuries later. In the Forum, the stony-faced Roman senators wearing their purple-striped togas are seated in careful rows, and on the red carpet in between them Julius Caesar is enthroned, with Mark Antony at his side and the eagle standard flying high above. The Roman crowds, comprising 4,500 Italian extras, fill every available space along the parade route and on the rooftops. Finally, 300 slaves arranged in six ranks enter the square pulling the two-ton float behind them, as they sway back and forth rhythmically under their herculean effort. An enormous float of Egyptian porphyry emerges through the Arch: it is a colossal, dark, *nemes*-wearing pharaoh head, and nestled under its smooth chin sits Cleopatra as the goddess Isis incarnate, wearing the *uraeus* crown and clothed in a \$6,500 dress of 24-carat gold thread, with her young son Caesarion calmly seated at her right hand. When the float comes to a halt in front of the admiring eyes of Caesar, and the enchanted eyes of Antony, hidden stairs are unfolded beneath Cleopatra's feet, and to the astonished dismay of the senators and their outraged wives, the queen playfully winks at her own fabulous daring and achievement. With this spectacular sequence, *Cleopatra* offers a vision of wealth and power to the cinematic audience that evokes the power and wealth of the "Hollywood on the Tiber" film industry to stage such spectacles.

For Italian director Federico Fellini, Cinecittà was home for four decades of filmmaking. Fellini made nearly all his productions on the studio lot, including his so-called "Roman trilogy" (Bondanella 1992, 205), three significant films that were shot almost entirely at Cinecittà studios and a few other locations around Italy: *La Dolce Vita* (1959), *Fellini Satyricon* (1969), and *Fellini's Roma* (1971). With this trio of brilliant, lyrical but unsettling films, the director sought to dismantle and de-mythologize several aspects of

the epic cinematic tradition depicting the city and culture of ancient Rome. But Fellini doesn't just offer a critique of this outmoded way of viewing Roman antiquity; rather he posits a new, unfamiliar, often disturbing but purely original way of imagining the ancient city, its monuments, and its inhabitants on screen. This is perhaps the primary reason why his films were produced almost entirely inside the vast studio complex and soundstages of Cinecittà, where the director's personal aesthetic vision was painstakingly recreated on extravagant sets, rather than shooting on location in the actual city of modern Rome.

La Dolce Vita captures the decadent atmosphere of Rome during the 1950s as "Hollywood on the Tiber," a louche urban magnet for Hollywood film directors and foreign celebrities, and thereby offers a meta-commentary about the city itself as a lavishly appointed film set (Bondanella 1992, 131–49). The theme of the film – "life defined as all façade and masquerade" – exposes the ancient capital of the world reduced to a place of shallow and sterile modernity (Bondanella 1987, 238). With *La Dolce Vita*, Fellini seeks to dislodge the cinematic audience from their familiar and comfortable perspective on the city of Rome, and so images are harshly juxtaposed to contrast modern life with the cultural achievements of Roman antiquity. In one frenzied scene, Fellini recreates the central urban setting of the ancient Baths of Caracalla to reveal how the once venerated site is now exploited as a Roman nightclub frequented by vulgar party-goers who are completely ignorant of history. The sequence at the Baths unblinkingly contrasts the magnificent civilization of ancient Rome with the emptiness and superficiality of popular culture that no longer values or even comprehends Roman antiquity. But the film also suggests that out of this cultural confusion and disintegration, a new, contemporary, hopeful way of imagining the city of Rome can emerge.

Fellini Satyricon is a very personal cinematic adaptation of a fragmentary novel by the ancient Roman writer, Petronius, which is utterly unlike the eighteenth-century novels used by earlier filmmakers in their epic recreations of ancient Rome (Bondanella 1992, 237–52). In this film, Fellini uses the disjointed scraps of the ancient text narrating the adventures of two lovers, Gitone and Encolpius, to "underline the extent of our alienation from the Roman past" (Bondanella 1987, 239). Against a fantastical backdrop representing the ancient city of Rome, completely reconstructed inside Cinecittà studios, Fellini seeks to portray his vision of a chaotic and crumbling pagan world as an analogy to modern society. The film follows the pair through a degenerate ancient urban Rome of surreal theaters, seedy brothels and dissolute banquets, where the status of Classical culture is shown to have fallen quite low. When the young men reject these decadent values, the film suggests the possibility for rebirth to new, more meaningful forms of art and culture.

Fellini's Roma merges the themes of the two earlier films in the trilogy – high art and filmmaking – while using the backdrop of the city of Rome, again almost entirely reconstructed inside the soundstages at Cinecittà (Bondanella 1992, 193–205). Here the meta-commentary about filmmaking is made more explicit, as Fellini himself appears in the film as a director making a documentary about the city of Rome. *Roma* offers several scenes and images to show how the city of Rome represents a combination of antiquity and modernity, where the lines between the two are constantly blurred and transgressed. In the scene where Fellini's film crew visits a construction site for a new city subway, all work has ceased due to the discovery of an ancient Roman villa decorated with a set of frescoes depicting human figures, whose intimate gazes directly meet the film viewers' eyes. But under the impact of the smoggy urban air of modern Rome, these unstable ancient images disappear instantly. The film's famous final sequence has a band of motorcyclists racing at night past the city's major ancient sites and monuments, the Forum and the Capitoline Hill, all eerily illuminated, until they converge on the Colosseum (Bondanella 1987, 250–51). As Fellini's camera speeds alongside them, these new invading barbarian hordes are intent on sacking the city of its ancient art and culture to use in recreating their own contemporary images of Rome.

A number of other classic films about Roman antiquity from the 1950s and 1960s were not produced in Italy at all, but rather were filmed in places that looked like, or were designed and constructed to look like, the city and suburbs of ancient Rome. Two early 1950s sword-and-sandal religious epics were shot in southern California for 20th-Century Fox: Henry Koster's *The Robe* (1953), and its concurrently filmed sequel, Delmer Daves' *Demetrius and the Gladiators* (1954) (Elley 1984, 126–8; Solomon 2001, 214–15; Cyrino 2005, 34–58). Perhaps the huge financial investment Fox made in developing the expensive new widescreen technology of CinemaScope prompted the Hollywood studio to shoot these films closer to home; even so, the golden hills around Los Angeles and the sunny regional climate provided a suitably Mediterranean-style location for the scenes set in the ancient city of Rome. For *Spartacus* (1960), Stanley Kubrick's powerful epic film on the slave revolt that stunned the Roman state in 73 BCE, independent producer and star Kirk Douglas also chose to shoot mainly in southern California to keep costs down (Elley 1984, 109–12; Solomon 2001, 50–57; Cyrino 2005, 89–120; Winkler 2007). The central California coast and countryside stood in for southern Italy, while interior scenes set in Roman houses and other buildings were filmed in local studios. The scenes situated at the opulent urban villa of Crassus were shot at Hearst Castle in San Simeon, which the film audience could readily identify when Crassus is seen striding by the gleaming marble colonnade of the famous outdoor Neptune Pool. After months of meticulous research, Kubrick decided to shoot the climactic final battle sequence in Spain, using a breathtaking widescreen format with

thousands of extras: many critics consider this to be the most realistic depiction of an ancient battle anywhere on film.

An epic film shot entirely in Spain was Anthony Mann's *The Fall of the Roman Empire* (1964) (Elley 1984, 105–9; Bondanella 1987, 224–8; Solomon 2001, 83–93; Cyrino 2005, 222–4; Winkler 2009). Just as this film set out to explore the question of Rome's eventual decline, some scholars ironically observe that it also marked the end of the era of big-budget epic films set in Roman antiquity. Yet for all its well-documented criticisms, the film demonstrates a robust commitment to authentic costumes and sets based on extensive academic research: the filmmakers used Edward Gibbon's masterful history of Rome to guide the script, and employed the popular writer Will Durant as the film's historical consultant. After spending most of its \$16 million budget on elaborate sets, the film was justifiably praised for its painstaking accuracy in recreating both the military mood and the urban setting of ancient Rome (Bondanella 1987, 224).

Much of the action takes place on the cold, isolated northern frontier, where the rustic sets of stone and wood represent the gloomy winter fortress where Marcus Aurelius spent his last years. In a powerful transition from dark frontier to sunlit city, Mann offers the bleak visual image of the emperor being cremated in the snow: the camera follows the smoke upwards, then cuts to the film's opulent reproduction of the metropolis of Rome (Bondanella 1987, 225). Breathtaking in its authenticity and grandeur, the vast set of the Forum and Capitoline Hill, complete with temples to Saturn and Jupiter, was rebuilt on several acres in the Spanish countryside. For Commodus's triumphal return to Rome, the film stages the procession with splendidly outfitted horses and legionary troops dressed in a variety of uniforms and armor from all over the Empire, as it passes by the circular temple of Vesta, a long aqueduct, towering victory columns, statue-filled archways and then arrives at the lofty temple of Capitoline Jove, sparkling in the sunlight. In the final scene where the stalwart Roman general Livius renounces the offer of imperial power, he hurriedly leaves the magnificent Forum set full of bickering old senators vying for the title of emperor: the image is one of the decadent marrow of Rome being eaten away from the inside.

It was this image of a decaying Roman city that inspired director Richard Lester to shoot his comic film, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* (1966), near the tattered sets used earlier for Mann's somber epic (Solomon 2001, 285–9; Cyrino 2005, 159–75). Though *A Funny Thing* is a raucous remake of an award-winning stage musical (first performed in 1962 and often restaged since), the director intended his film version to be a deliberate critical commentary upon the grandiose and visually stylized reality adopted by the genre of mid-century epic films set in ancient Rome (Malamud 2001, 203). Because of the director's interest in historical naturalism, and his desire to give an accurate portrait of everyday life for non-elite ancient

Romans, the film's exterior sets reflect the authentic squalor of an ancient urban street "in a less fashionable suburb of Rome," as the main character, the wily slave Pseudolus, describes his block. When the Roman captain, Miles Gloriosus, leads his martial parade through the city, the self-important pomp of his procession offers a hilariously incongruous contrast to the narrow, muddy lanes and the disgruntled plebeians who sneer at him from their crumbling windows. The coarse visual mood of the film's outdoor sets is accentuated by the shabby interior designs and the realistically grimy make-up and costumes. In the final frames of the film, colorful representations of classical Roman art are slowly covered up by cartoon flies, an image that evokes the gritty, seedy aspects of Roman antiquity, rather than the ostentatious, marbled luxury exhibited in earlier epic films set in the city of ancient Rome.

A New Epic

More than three decades after the last Roman spectacular was screened, the cinema returned to the ancient Roman past with *Gladiator* (2000), the unexpectedly popular, critically acclaimed, and enormously profitable blockbuster hit directed by Ridley Scott for DreamWorks and Universal Pictures (Solomon 2001, 87–95; Winkler 2004; Cyrino 2005, 207–56; Burgoyne 2008, 74–99). Yet *Gladiator* is in many ways a very different kind of film from those earlier epics, especially in terms of its production and visual aesthetics. New, state-of-the-art computer imaging technologies allowed the creative team behind *Gladiator* an unprecedented scale and a stunning level of detail with which to recreate and display a familiar, yet absolutely original, vision of the ancient city of Rome. With a budget of over \$103 million, and an international cast of gifted actors, director Scott was inspired by the dramatic and visual possibilities for creating a revitalized gladiator epic that would reflect contemporary issues (Cyrino 2005, 225–6).

Most of the film's action takes place in the city of Rome, filmed on location on the island of Malta, where the main set was an awesome replica of the Colosseum that cost over \$1 million and took several months to build. In an appropriate analogy for the way *Gladiator* combines and reprocesses earlier cinematic images of Roman antiquity using modern digital technology, the lower two tiers of the amphitheater model were constructed at full scale – a full 40 per cent of the 157-foot height (48 meters) of the original four tiers – and the rest was added with computer-generated imagery. The film's shots of the Colosseum from above are a mind-boggling sight, as if coming from a camera suspended high over a contemporary sports arena. A striking moment

in the film occurs when the provincial gladiators enter the Colosseum for their initial fight, and they are staggered by its sheer immensity; then they are enveloped by the roar of 50,000 spectators, both real extras in the lower levels and digitally created Romans in the tiers higher up. The audience of the film follows the gladiators' stunned gaze as the camera sweeps upward to behold all four stories of that marvelous feat of human imagination, both the ancient conception of it and its modern cinematic recreation. In *Gladiator*, Scott and his production team revitalized the epic form with the application of new digital techniques and innovative special effects to create an updated reconstruction of the ancient city of Rome.

Television

The medium of television has also recreated the setting of ancient Rome to attract and entertain viewers (Solomon in Cyrino 2008, 11–28). Starting in the early 1970s, the preferred format for televising antiquity in both the United States and Great Britain has been the miniseries, or “limited series,” as the series' limited duration would counter its expensive production costs. One of the first television series set in the ancient city of Rome, and one of the most successful dramatic serials of all time, was the boundary-breaking BBC miniseries *I, Claudius* (1976), an adaptation of Robert Graves's novels *I, Claudius* (1934) and *Claudius, the God* (1935); the series was later aired on American television during the 1977–78 season as part of PBS's *Masterpiece Theatre* series. Filmed mainly on interior sets at the BBC TV Center in London, the series follows the history of the notorious Julio-Claudian family of early imperial Rome, as narrated over thirteen episodes by the elderly *princeps*, Claudius. In contrast to the evil emperor stereotype familiar from earlier epic films on ancient Rome, Claudius is portrayed as a more contemporary hero in a serialized domestic drama who recounts his private experiences while attempting to deal with his dysfunctional family. This thematic and narrative shift is reflected in the series' spare sets that reconstruct an atypically austere image of the urban imperial villas on the ancient Palatine hill, suggesting a more modernist or even ironic commentary on the grandiosity of traditional Roman epic cinema.

Though the exorbitant costs of producing quality television series set in ancient Rome curbed the genre for a few years, the format once again became popular at the turn of the millennium. During the last decade, at the rate of about one per year, several international companies produced shorter series or made-for-television movies on ancient Roman themes. These include Hallmark's enjoyable *Cleopatra* (1999), a two-part film shot in Morocco and broadcast on ABC; the internationally co-produced and artistically influential *Julius Caesar* (2003), a two-part series filmed in Malta and aired on TNT; the

USA Network's *Spartacus* (2004), a faithful remake, shot in Bulgaria, of the 1960 film; and ABC's critically panned *Empire* (2005), a series in six episodes shot on location in Rome and southern Italy. At the same time, another much more prestigious television series was being filmed in Rome, both at the Cinecittà studios and in and around the nearby Italian countryside: this was the series *Rome* (2005–7), a lavish co-production between the premium cable company, HBO Entertainment, and the BBC, in partnership with RAI (Cyrino 2008). The series follows the return of Julius Caesar from Gaul in 52 BCE down to the triumph of Octavian in 29 BCE; it unfolds over two seasons comprising 22 episodes and was thus more like a standard television series, scheduled to air on a regular night (Sunday) over consecutive weeks.

The HBO–BBC series *Rome* marks an exultant return to the celebrated studios at Cinecittà, which had been extensively upgraded and expanded to include state-of-the-art digital facilities and equipment, as the ideal site for a production set in the ancient city of Rome. At Cinecittà, the series was shot on six sound stages and several massive outdoor sets covering five acres of the studio's back lot, where impressively detailed sets were built to recreate a number of elite ancient Roman villas, the entire Roman Forum, its temples and the Senate House, and the vast slum area of central urban Rome, the Subura, which included several plebeian apartments or *insulae*, taverns and shops. One of the most expensive productions in the history of television, at a cost of nearly \$200 million, the series *Rome* offers high-quality production values, with a visual spectacle of sets, props and costumes both sumptuous and highly authentic, as well as intelligent scripts, gripping plots, and exceptional acting (Cyrino 2008, 3). Two of the most spectacular sequences in the series are the magnificent triumph scenes that progress through the enormous Forum set: Caesar's triumph upon his return from Gaul (episode 10), and Octavian's after his defeat of Antony and Cleopatra (episode 22). The series' creators wanted to portray a more genuine picture of ancient Rome, a gritty and realistic city as opposed to what they call the "HollyRome" often seen in earlier feature films set in Roman antiquity. Historical consultant Jonathan Stamp observed that the series aimed for an evocative "authenticity" rather than absolute or slavish accuracy in the depiction of the dirt, squalor and violence of the city of ancient Rome.

For more than a century, the ancient city of Rome has served as a compelling stage for the production of superlative contemporary cinema and television, and it will surely continue to inspire the imagination of artists to recreate the eternal city on screen.

Guide to Further Reading

The most important and comprehensive study on the subject is Jon Solomon's pioneering work *The Ancient World in the Cinema* (2001, revised and expanded edition), with lively commentaries on over four hundred films, along with copious images and illustrations. Still useful for its perceptive analyses is Derek Elley's *The Epic Film: Myth and History* (1984); for an updated take on the epic film genre, see now also Robert Burgoyne's *The Hollywood Historical Film* (2008), and Burgoyne's recent collection of essays on the rejuvenation of the modern genre, *The Epic Film in World Culture* (2011). For an engaging discussion of how the image of the city of Rome is portrayed in contemporary media, see the final chapter of Peter Bondanella's significant work, *The Eternal City: Roman Images in the Modern World* (1987). On the depiction of ancient Rome and Romans in film, see Maria Wyke's *Projecting the Past: Ancient Rome, Cinema, and History* (1997), which focuses on how individual figures and events from Roman history have been depicted in cinema since the early 1900s; while Monica S. Cyrino's *Big Screen Rome* (2005) thoroughly explores the narrative, production and meaning of nine major films that recreate Roman antiquity, from *Quo Vadis* (1951) to *Gladiator* (2000). For studies of specific films and filmmakers dealing with the theme of ancient Rome, see Peter Bondanella's *The Cinema of Federico Fellini* (1992); and the trilogy of volumes edited by Martin M. Winkler on *Gladiator: Film and History* (2004), *Spartacus: Film and History* (2007), and *The Fall of the Roman Empire: Film and History* (2009). On the critically acclaimed HBO–BBC television series, see the collection of essays edited by Monica S. Cyrino, *Rome, Season One: History Makes Television* (2008).

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